

COUNTRY LIFE

VOL. XXV.—No. 644.

SATURDAY, MAY 8th, 1909.

PRICE SIXPENCE, BY POST, 6½d.
[REGISTERED AT THE G.P.O. AS A NEWSPAPER.]



FRANCES, DINAH AND KATHLEEN, DAUGHTERS OF FRANCIS TENNANT, ESQ.

By J. J. Shannon, A.R.A.

UoP



THE Journal for all interested in

Country Life and Country Pursuits

CONTENTS.

"Frances, Dinah and Kathleen, daughters of Francis Tennant, Esq." (64)	PAGE 650
Not Sympathy but Justice	650
Country Notes	651
Some Destructive Insects. (Illustrated)	653
A Baroque House. (Illustrated)	655
The Charcoal-burner. (Illustrated)	656
Tales of Country Life: The Elderly Romance of Mr. Howard and Mrs. St. George	659
Birds of Prey in the Highlands. (Illustrated)	662
In the Garden	665
Country Home: Charlton House.—II. (Illustrated)	666
Wild Country Life	675
Literature	677
The Best in the Magazines	679
The Fly-box	679
Law and the Land	680
On the Green. (Illustrated)	680
Correspondence	682

How to Cook Vegetables (Miss Christmas); French and English Hounds (X); The Winchmore Hill Woods (Mr. A. Lewin-Warner); Rain-water Tanks; New Hedges; "At the Very Top of Their Speed"; A Dilemma; Planting Daffodils (Mr. H. H. Warner); Cherry Blossom; The Nightingale's Song (Mr. Courtney); The Cuckoo (Mr. Ord); The Raven (Mr. Borrell); The Dunwich Vines; Young Rabbits; Children and Wild Flowers; East African Trophy (Mrs. Meinertshagen).

EDITORIAL NOTICE.

The Editor will be glad to consider any MSS., photographs, or sketches submitted to him, but they should be accompanied with stamped addressed envelopes for return if unsuitable. In case of loss or injury he cannot hold himself responsible for MSS., photographs, or sketches, and publication in COUNTRY LIFE can alone be taken as evidence of acceptance. The name and address of the owner should be placed on the back of all pictures and MSS.

NOT SYMPATHY . . BUT JUSTICE.

THE phrase that we have adopted as a title for this article occurs in the speech made by Mr. Balfour in criticising the Budget. It puts in a nutshell the feelings of the majority of those who are deriving their livelihood from the soil. The situation is peculiar. After a prolonged depression, agriculture had at last begun to show signs of raising its head above water again. The high price of wheat and a sympathetic increase in the value of other farm produce had begun to bring profits once more to the farmer, but the industry of agriculture was still in much need of nursing. Those who pursue it have to face a competition greater than that which assails the votaries of any other calling in the United Kingdom. Supplies of food pour into England from every part of the world, and are distributed among the consumers at a cheaper rate of transport than that charged for British produce of the same kind. The State in this battle has given no help whatever to the owner and cultivator. It spends less upon agricultural education and experiment than any other country in Europe, and its departments have never taken the pains to organise the preparation and marketing of goods as Denmark and other agricultural countries have done for a long time. Yet landowners are taxed in England as heavily as though they composed the richest class in the State. We all know that this is not the case. There was a time, previous to the great industrial development of the Mid-Victorian epoch, when land was in the ascendant over industrialism; but the year 1845 marked an end of that state, and since then the great bulk of the wealth of England has gone to those who are engaged in commerce, while during a quarter of a century land has been more of a burden than a source of wealth to the individual owning it. Yet it receives drastic treatment in Mr. Lloyd-George's Budget. It has been pointed out that the payment of Death Duties comes extremely hard upon a landowner, especially when, as is often the case, he inherits the landed estate without much actual money in hand. The land is valued at so much, and the Death Duties imposed on it. But how is he to raise the funds except

by borrowing? And if he were ever so willing to sell, he is not in the position of the proprietor of stocks and shares who has merely to telephone to his broker in order to dispose of his property.

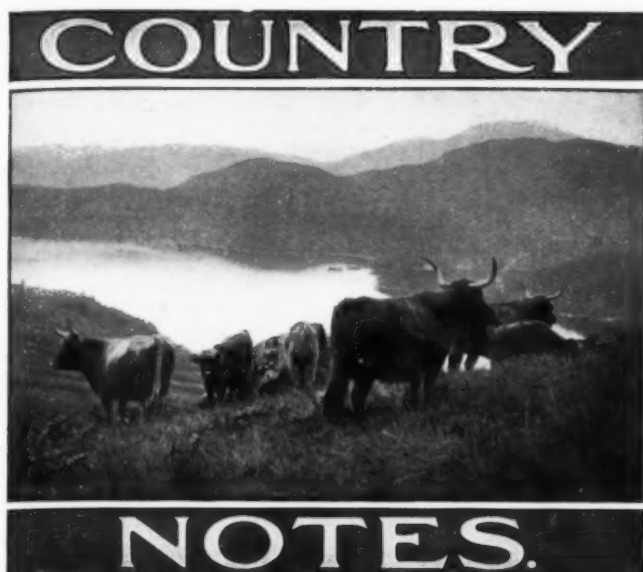
Those who wish to understand the operation of the Death Duties cannot do better than read a letter which Mr. E. G. Pretyman sent to *The Times* on Monday. He took as his example an estate of moderate-size from which the gross return, after deducting rates, tithes, etc., is £4,700. Incidentally he made the remark that "the owner is fortunate if he obtains anything over a thousand pounds a year for his privy purse" from such a property. Lord Carrington made a cheap sneer at this on the following day. He remarked that if Mr. Pretyman could not obtain a clear profit of more than £1,000 from an estate, after deductions were made for rates, tithe and so on, he should at once change his agent. The Minister for Agriculture is himself a landowner, but the ingenious device by which he hands over his Lincolnshire land to a committee, who sublet it to small-holders, allows him to escape from the expenses of attending to the roads, bridges and buildings on the estate. The present writer is familiar with the accounts of some of the best-managed estates in England, and, despite what Lord Carrington says, does not hesitate to endorse the opinion of Mr. Pretyman. Take for example, the provision of sanitary dairies and buildings, such as are demanded by the present outcry for cleanliness in milk. The tenants cannot make these improvements, and on many an estate at the present moment the whole of the income is devoted to this purpose. Some return may come back in future years, but there is no certainty of its doing so, and a very large number of landowners make such improvements without any definite hope of securing a return. However, this is not really essential to the arguments set forth by Mr. Pretyman. The owner of an estate which has a gross rental of £4,700 is, in the first place, assessed for income-tax, the deductions from the total amount consisting of one-eighth for land and one-sixth for buildings, or, say, a seventh of £4,700. The Chancellor of the Exchequer proposes to allow a further deduction of a twentieth, say £900 altogether, so that the assessment will be £3,800 and the income-tax at one-half will be £230. That is a very substantial contribution to the Revenue on the part of a landowner; but the Succession Duty is much more formidable. It is payable at present on the capital value, which Mr. Pretyman assumes to be twenty-five years' purchase, that is, £95,000. Independent of this, there would be an assessment on the capital value of the manor house and its contents, which we may take to be £5,000, so that the value subject to Estate Duty would have to be put at £100,000. The rate of Estate Duty in this case is 9 per cent., and the Settlement Duty is to be 2 per cent., so that the sum payable under these two imposts will be £11,000. The gradation of the Succession Duty works out in this way: if the succession be direct, at 1 per cent., which will amount to £890; if the property passes to a brother, the duty at 5 per cent. will be £4,450; if to any other relation or a stranger in blood, at 10 per cent. it will be £8,900.

Now where is the landlord to find this fund? Mr. Lloyd-George, though he does not seem to have any very intimate acquaintance with the land question, still admits that a considerable proportion of the gross receipts "are put back into the land in the shape of fructifying improvements and in maintaining and keeping in good repair structures which are essential to the proper conduct of the agricultural business upon which the rents depend." This is the only source from which the landowner, as landowner, can obtain the money wherewith to meet the demands of the tax-collector. It means, therefore, that he will have to starve the estate in order to pay the Death Duties. He must cease to erect dairies, to make drains or carry out any of the innumerable improvements which go on from year to year. If, as occasionally happens, the deaths were to follow one another rapidly, the estate would be reduced to a very abject condition indeed. Yet so far we have only treated on a section of the Budget which concerns land. It would take a longer space than we can spare to show the effect of the taxes on unearned increments, reversions of leases and ungotten minerals. All these must be added together before we can arrive at the true handicap imposed on the landowner.

Our Portrait Illustration.

OUR frontispiece this week is a reproduction of the picture in this year's Academy by Mr. J. J. Shannon, A.R.A., of "Frances, Dinah and Kathleen, daughters of Francis Tennant, Esq."

* * It is particularly requested that no permissions to photograph houses, gardens, or livestock on behalf of COUNTRY LIFE be granted except when direct application is made from the offices of the paper. When such requests are received, the Editor would esteem the kindness of readers if they would forward the correspondence at once to him.



IN our leading article to-day an attempt is made to show the disastrous effect upon land which the Budget proposals are likely to produce. They will not only cripple the owner but rob estates of their selling value. Even more to be lamented is the indifference shown by the Chancellor of the Exchequer to the most vital interests in the country. The needs of the Navy predominate over those of any other at the present time, and there is no Englishman worthy of the name who would not have responded generously to a call that he should make a sacrifice for them. If Canning were alive, he would find in this production of the Chancellor of the Exchequer exactly the same material against which his witty satire was directed in the early years of the nineteenth century. We have abundance of that cheap generosity which consists in giving away the money of other people; the country is not asked to make a sacrifice for that first of all duties—self-defence.

Whatever opinion one may hold about the Budget in general, the figures in reference to the new licence duties upon the leading London hotels are certainly astonishing. We understand that at the present time the proprietors of these hotels pay licence duty amounting to some £600 per annum. Under Mr. Lloyd-George's proposals, assuming that the duties are to be charged on the rateable values and not upon the gross values of the hotels, the duties will amount to the enormous sum of £62,000. It certainly looks as though the Treasury authorities had not realised the effect of the proposed taxation when formulating their plans. We believe that in the case of the Waldorf Hotel, which was granted a new licence quite recently, the monopoly value was fixed at £1,000 per annum, whereas under Mr. Lloyd-George's scheme the proprietor will have to pay no less than £4,500 per annum.

In Canada as well as in England, the announcement that Lord Grey is to continue Governor-General for another year has been cordially welcomed. Lord Grey's characteristics were sure to be appreciated in the Dominion. He is a typical Northumbrian, with something of the bluntness of an old-fashioned squire in his manner, hearty and kind and patriotic—solid virtues that have endeared him to those with whom he has come in contact, whether in South Africa, in his native county or in the Dominion of Canada. It would be difficult to lay hands on anyone who is precisely qualified to take his place, and, therefore, his continuance in office is satisfactory from every point of view. It should not go unmentioned that he has been efficiently seconded by Lady Grey, whose popularity everywhere is at least equal to his own.

It appears that a compromise has been entered into between the butchers and farmers over the meat warranty question in London. We are sorry that this should have been done before an arrangement was come to in the provinces also. Already there are announcements of butchers coming up to Islington Cattle Market to buy cattle instead of going to their own dealers. The way out has been found by a Market Insurance Company, which, for the payment of a shilling for every bullock and heifer brought to slaughter within ten days, agrees to indemnify the purchaser against loss. The butchers profess that this is all that they wanted from the beginning, and so far the plan appears to have worked very well at the first Islington Cattle Market; but every effort should be made to get it or a similar arrangement adopted elsewhere, otherwise the sellers of fat cattle will suffer.

Cows are understood not to be admitted into the arrangement. Those that have given milk are so frequently tainted with tuberculosis that the insurance people would not guarantee them unless at an extra high payment.

A very wise and sensible decision has been taken by Lord Morley. It is to establish an office for the express purpose of looking after Indian students when they are in this country. Everybody knows that the majority of them come here not only strangers but friendless, and frequently they arrive without having had any good advice, either as to the lodging of themselves or the choice of the educational establishment to which they should get attached. Lord Morley's scheme is to start this office with an advisory committee which will keep a list of suitable lodgings and boarding-houses, which they may consult. Assistance will be given on the social side also, so that the feeling of friendlessness in this country may be removed. The committee already nominated will have Lord Ampthill as chairman, and looks a very workmanlike body. Mr. T. W. Arnold is to be at the head of the office and secretary to the committee.

Some anomalies of the Old Age Pensions Act are described in a report by the Local Pensions Committee of the London County Council. They make several representations that ought to be of use to Mr. Lloyd-George when he comes to the work of revising the Act. One is to define the amount of capital the possession of which does not interfere with the granting of the pension. They cite a case in which they had to grant a pension of five shillings each to an old couple, one of whom owned £980 in the bank on deposit at 1 per cent. and furniture to the value of £80. Obviously this is an injustice. The people benefited are those who will inherit the property of the old people when they die. Two annuities could be purchased on which the old people could end their days in comfort; and if that is the case, there is obviously no need to grant pensions to them. Other amendments are suggested, but most of them are unfortunately in the direction of enlarging the scope of the Act by doing away with certain Poor Relief and other disqualifications.

AN ARRAIGNMENT.

Boast not to me of your modesty
Big White Lily, for, list you,
I was hid by the Copper Beech
When the sun came out and kissed you.
I saw him linger for long at your side,
Denials are useless, for, hark you,
You asked for his kisses with your tongue of gold
O! 'tis naught to your credit, so mark you.
What a jest to speak of your pure cold face!
'Twere better in blushes to lave you.
You are not cold, you are white with the heat
Of the passionate kisses he gave you.

Alice May.

Colonel R. F. Meysey-Thompson has brought a severe accusation against that beautiful visitor to the inland in spring, the black-headed gull. He says this bird is generally considered one of the best friends the farmer has, and may be seen in spring following the plough in company with the rooks. The accusation brought against it is that it devours the young trout after a loch or tarn has been carefully stocked. We are afraid it would not be possible to exonerate the gull from these charges. During a dry summer the writer has often watched them in a hilly country fishing with the cleverness of a human angler. They fly up the stream so as to approach the trout from behind, and every now and then may be seen dropping to strike one. Then when they have reached a certain point they wheel round, and, making a wide circuit, come back almost to the point of starting and resume their up-stream fishing. Experience has told them that if they fly down the stream the trout will see them at once and disappear between the stones or into other hiding-places.

So much may be readily granted, but it is only during very dry weather that we have witnessed this procedure on the part of the black-headed gull. It builds its nest inland obviously because of its fondness for grubs and worms, which are plentifully unearthed during the operations of husbandry that go on during spring-time. They appear at one pond we know of with the utmost regularity on March 25th, and they disappear from it what time the corn-crake is heard loudest among the ripening hay. Like all other winged creatures they have their times of famine, and are then obliged to forage round for a living where they can get it. That the streams attract them then it is impossible to deny, and unfortunately the waters just at periods like this have shrunk to their lowest, and the fish are collected in small pools wherein

they are easily caught. Still, the black-headed gull does so much service to husbandry, and is itself so beautiful and welcome a visitor from the seashore, that it would be a thousand pities if a prejudice were engendered against it.

The Budget proposals gave a fillip to the proceedings of the British Road Conference, which had been going on for some days. On the whole, it will be seen that motorists take a very reasonable view of the proceedings of Mr. Lloyd-George. They are for the most part willing to pay the proposed tax, provided that something is done for the roads. There is less unanimity about petrol, the cost of which has already been increased, but, as Lord Montagu of Beaulieu says, the effect of the taxation of petrol will probably be to make people use petroleum instead. He grimly adds that this would mean less cost to the owners, but more smell to the public. The whole question of our highways needs tackling in a large and authoritative manner. It is absurd that small communities have to maintain lengths of road that are of no particular use to them. What is needed seems to be foreshadowed in the Budget speech, namely, a central authority and a system of Imperial taxation, so that the responsibility of keeping up the roads should no longer rest with the local authorities. It was very different in the days when nearly all the traffic was local in character. Now the majority of it comes from a distance.

A Postmaster-General can never be without worries, and one with which Mr. Sydney Buxton is afflicted is the tendency of people to use halfpenny stamps instead of penny ones. A halfpenny stamp possesses several advantages that commend it to the consumer. Far more letters and communications of one kind and another are sent under open cover than was formerly the case. It is the stamp for newspapers, and whoever has a stock of halfpenny stamps in his possession can employ them for many purposes for which the penny stamp is intended. But Mr. Buxton's point of view is that this is unprofitable, since it costs as much to make a halfpenny stamp as a penny one. Thus the infinitesimal margin of gain disappears, and the Post Office, which used to reckon on making a little money out of stamps, is now in the way of losing it through the too great popularity of the halfpenny variety.

Sir Philip Burne-Jones has directed attention to a danger incidental to the possible sale of Holbein's celebrated picture "The Duchess of Milan," namely, that of its going to America. He says, with perfect truth, that the sale involves this possibility, and he goes on to point out that were such a transference to take place the days of the picture are practically numbered. The reason given is that "no painting upon panel can survive many years in the overheated atmosphere of American rooms or galleries." Connoisseurs are aware that the wood inevitably cracks, and Sir Philip thinks that a great responsibility attaches to those concerned in sending a panel picture of first-rate importance to America. His remedy lies in a subscription for the purpose of retaining it at home. It is understood that the price at which it has been bought, namely, £60,000, would not be increased if the country wished to keep it. It is, however, enormous, and one hesitates to advocate the expenditure of such a sum even upon this beautiful Holbein.

So much acrimonious criticism had been levelled during the past year against the methods obtaining at Burlington House that it was a matter of considerable interest to see how far the Hanging Committee had profited by it. That the critics have not thundered in vain, the reduced number of canvases and the smaller proportion of worthless "subject" pictures shown would certainly seem to indicate. Moreover, a distinct attempt is noticeable this year, for the first time, to hang the best work in the best positions. Steps have certainly been made in the right direction, and there is reason for hoping that the reforms so much needed may now gradually be effected. It is rash to speak, however, while the full list of the pictures purchased under the terms of the Chantrey Bequest has yet to be published.

Others than "fellows in foolscap uniform turned up with ink" will read with pleasure the lecture that Dr. Van-der-Poorten Schwartz, a contributor to our columns under the name of Maarten Maartens, delivered at the Authors' Club the other night. It would be out of place here to discuss details industriously gathered together by a learned and acute mind; but it is always of interest to feel more and more how the literature of other countries is interlaced with our own. It would be absurd, as the lecturer said, to accuse our great writers of plagiarism; but the reading of foreign literature coloured their own conceptions. We find in the first of our great poets, Chaucer, proofs and to spare of his familiarity with Boccaccio and other Italian writers. Dr. Van-der-Poorten Schwartz gives conclusive evidence that "Paradise Lost" was to some extent coloured by what Milton had read of Grotius and Vondel. Vondel, in his "Lucifer," places

in Paradise those wild animals enumerated by Isaiah, and added two which were not in that list, namely, the tiger and the elephant. So does Milton, who also found material for his study of Satan in the "Adamus Exul" of Grotius. All this only goes to prove that the literature of the world is a noble edifice, the parts of which all rest on the same foundation.

Some time ago a number of Scotch farmers—each of whom was successful in his calling—were sent out as a commission to make a report on farming in Canada. This has now been published, and proves to be such a document as might be expected from sober-minded but keen Scotchmen. They take on the whole a favourable view of Canadian prospects, but they are far from painting the scene *couleur de rose*. They tell the agricultural labourer plainly that if he has no ambition and no ability to be anything else, he will not be better off in Canada than in Scotland; but if he wishes to reach the position of an occupying owner, "Canada is emphatically the place for him." They do not recommend the small capitalist in this country to buy land at once in Canada; it is much better for him to go over and work on the land as a hired hand until he knows something about the soil and the climate. They also point out that the Canadians are very proud of their country and, accordingly, a little apt to indulge in "honest exaggerations." Wherefore it is not advisable to put too much trust in the various touts and land agents who are always ready to take the emigrant by the hand. Those who are meditating settlement in Canada in any capacity will do well not only to obtain this report, but to read, mark and inwardly digest it before taking the decisive step.

THE EPITAPH.

"Will you forgive me?" Yes, I will forgive you;

There is nought left me now, but to forgive:

"I did not mean it." No; you did not mean it;

There was no hurt in words so fugitive.

Swiftly they came, and swifter should vanish,

As the first snowflakes gather and dispart:

They speak not well who say that hearts are broken:

There is no meaning in a broken heart.

"Will you forgive me?" echoes and re-echoes:

My foolish answer I reiterate.

"I did not mean it," echoes and re-echoes:

I cannot weep, nor laugh, nor even bate.

E. C. T.

There seems to have been a sudden revival on the part of the modern medical faculty of interest in the old-time belief in the efficacy of bee-stings as a cure for rheumatism. Much of medical science is mysterious, as it is, no doubt, right that it should be to the lay mind; but what "the man in the street" does not plainly understand is why, if the cure depends, as he is told it does, on the formic acid of the bees, the acid should not be injected by less primitive and better-controlled means. Of course, it may not be the same thing, thus administered, but if so, he would like to be told why not. There is not the slightest doubt that bee-stings affect different people in very different degrees, and also that the atmosphere, or some subtle association, that some people carry about with them is very distasteful to bees, so that they will readily sting one man and not another. It is said that the gardener will generally be unmolested, while the groom, with the scent of the stables about him, will be fiercely attacked. It may be merely that the insects re-ent the odour of ammonia; but even if the reasons are more "personal" they hardly suggest the explanation of the superior efficacy of formic acid conveyed by a bee-sting rather than by other means.

While we are on this subject it may be of some value to those who are beginning to keep bees to remind them that it is possible to inoculate against the poison of the sting. One of our scientific men, Professor Farmer, told the writer of this note that he did this by first having himself stung lightly through a comparatively thick piece of blotting-paper, then less lightly through thinner paper, till he got down to the finest tissue, after which he was immune from the ill-effects usually produced by the sting of the honey-bee. This is a useful thing for the apiarian to know.

According to that proverbial wisdom of the country-side, which it does not by any means do to treat as if it were altogether foolishness, "when the oak's before the ash, then there's going to be a splash; when the ash precedes the oak, then there's going to be a soak." We have seldom seen a year in which the oak, in its new spring growth, has been more definitely in advance of the ash than has been the case this year. Many oaks were quite green while the ash leaf-buds were still of their own peculiar dead black. Therefore, if the proverb be at all a true indicator, we may fairly expect little more in the coming weeks than a mere splash of rain, and need not fear a soaking. It is

likely that the observation of many years has shown a general rule that after a cold early spring, such as retards the development of the delicate ash more than that of the hardier oak, the ensuing month or two are marked by less rainy weather than when a warmer spring encourages the ash to unfold its buds more quickly.

The writer of a recent leading article in one of the daily papers on the very serious matter of fires on commons and forests has, no doubt, said the right word in suggesting that the wisest preventive measure is for the lord of the manor or conservators to cut such rides as may serve to stop the wide spread of a fire however kindled. At the same time, he does not appear to have appreciated the malice of the perpetrators of many of these fires, or the ingenuity of the means employed to start them. These are far more elaborate, in the hands of the determined incendiary, than the box of matches and dried gorse of which he writes. An evil ingenuity is exercised in the invention of contrivances, which we would rather not describe, as to do so would only be to put a weapon into the hand of the enemy. Comparatively few fires, we like to think, are deliberately caused, but several undisputed instances are on record. One of the worst was once

lighted by a Socialist because his party had been forbidden to hold political meetings on a piece of common land.

It seems just a little like a paradox to claim that a drift-net is a fixed engine. Nevertheless, that is the decision which was reached some time ago, very fortunately for the welfare of salmon and sea-going trout, by the House of Lords in reference to a certain manner of Scottish drift-netting which has, in consequence, been declared illegal in the river mouths and tideways of Scotland. A case which appears on the face of it to be rather similar is now being brought by the Honourable the Irish Society, owners and lessors of the salmon-fisheries in the river Bann and elsewhere, of which the purpose is to get a decision affirming that the drift-netting off the North-West Irish Coast is contrary to the Irish Fisheries Act, and that the drift-net, as there used, is in fact a fixed engine as defined by the law. The question, both as originally raised in Scotland and now brought forward again in Ireland, seems to depend, for its legal answer, on the manner of the net's use. If so employed as to obstruct the passage of salmon seeking to come to the rivers to spawn it appears, as is most proper that it should do, to violate the intention of the Act.

SOME DECEITFUL INSECTS.

AMONG common British insects there are cases enough of what is generally understood to be protective coloration for us all to be familiar with some examples. There are butterflies with gaily-painted upper surfaces to their wings which have under-sides so sombre and inconspicuous that, when they sit with folded wings upon a tree trunk or a grey stone, they become almost invisible. Numbers of moths which are similarly hard to see when at rest have gaudy lower wings which make them noticeable objects as soon as they take to flight. A great number of caterpillars mimic in their appearance the leaves or twigs or lichens on the trees which furnish their regular food so closely as to be extremely difficult to distinguish from their daily surroundings. None the less, there are baffling phenomena which make it dangerous to speak rashly of all resemblances in Nature to other natural objects as protective. There are insects

admirably adapted to resemble surroundings which they never frequent. There appear to be changes now in progress in some species, as in the direction of melanism, which, so far as we can see, contribute nothing to their better security. There is, moreover, a constant difficulty in adapting the



Hugh Main. Copyright.
CHRYSLIS SIMULATING A SNAKE.

human point of view to that of other creatures. We see things with our eyes, and in the daylight; whereas the coloration may be adjusted to light quite other than broad daylight and to the vision of eyes which see differently from ours. Thus the brilliantly-decorated coral snakes of Southern America are commonly cited as examples of what are known as "warning" colours; but it has recently been shown that the combination of vivid red and black, so striking when seen by us in the daylight, is a combination which tends to become almost indistinguishable in the semi-darkness either of night or of the holes and other dim places where the creatures chiefly live. Experiments also with artificial flowers have seemed to demonstrate that bees, at least, see colours quite differently from the way in which we see them. There is to them no resemblance between colours which are the same to us, so that it is difficult to infer with confidence that any scheme of coloration in an insect, however deceptive it may be to us, is equally deceptive to that insect's natural enemies. In some cases, however, the agreement both of form and colour with the surroundings which the insect does habitually frequent is so exact that it is impossible to doubt that the resemblance is purposeful, so far as it is permissible to speak of the evolutionary processes as purposeful at all, and among these is the curious leaf insect shown in the accompanying photographs. The particular specimen photographed comes from the Seychelles, but it is found elsewhere; and not only is it almost incredibly like a leaf both in shape and colour, but it will be seen to be veined in precise imitation of the foliage on which it rests. The inferences from this resemblance would not be so certain if all the members of the same family had approximately the same appearance; but first cousins to the leaf insects are the stick insects and mantises, which may be, and frequently are, picked up in mistake for twigs or bits of stick in the countries where they abound. In Borneo another member of the family lives on a flower of the azalea kind, and is coloured pink and so shaped as to be practically indistinguishable from the blossoms among which it sits to wait for the flies which come to visit them. That in this case the similarity of colour is not a similarity to human eyes only appears to be proved by the fact that observers have



Hugh Main. Copyright.
STICK INSECT WHICH RESEMBLES A TWIG.

reported watching flies come and settle on the insect, evidently mistaking it for a flower, and when a fly of sufficient plumpness to tempt the other's appetite came along, it was promptly seized and eaten. The leaf insects, stick insects and mantises are so closely allied that we are justified in assuming that they have all developed from a common ancestor in quite recent times, as time is reckoned in the evolutionary processes. They had a common, what we will call, phasma-mantis progenitor, and have since diverged, by quite different structural growths, into close resemblance to things so widely unlike as a green leaf, a brown twig and a pink flower-petal. We can only conjecture that in their case variability must have been almost infinite; but only those varieties survived which chanced to have a resemblance to some natural object in their surroundings. All the intermediate gradations were killed off; so that there are left various species, each assisted by its own peculiar resemblance to something else, still first cousins, but superficially almost as grotesquely unlike each other as they could well be if they had no sort of mutual relationship.

While some insects thus approximate to harmless surroundings so that their prey comes innocently within their reach, and others, again, are so like an environment which is indifferent that the creatures which prey upon them cannot see them, still others mimic dangerous things, whereby their enemies are kept at a distance. In a large number of cases this resemblance is to a snake or a lizard, and we appear to find good reason for this in the fact that it is snakes and lizards of which the larger predatory insects, birds and small mammals are likely to stand most in dread, so that a likeness to a snake or lizard is probably the best protection that an otherwise defenceless insect can possess. The eye-spots which adorn so effectively the wings of many butterflies and moths are so arranged that when the insect is at rest, especially if it is in a hole in a tree or other dark recess, it looks forbiddingly like the head of a snake or lizard; and a bird or

immensely more marked. Some two years ago there was discovered in Upper Burma by Lieutenant-Colonel Waller-Barrow, R.A.M.C., a new species of moth in which this resemblance occurs not in the caterpillar, but in the chrysalis. This chrysalis is attached in a very curious way by its tail-end to a twig, from which it protrudes at nearly a right angle, the result being the extraordinary likeness to a snake's head which is shown in the photographs. In the details of the markings, moreover, it



L. H. Main. LEAF INSECT: UNDER SIDE.

Copyright



L. H. Main. LEAF INSECT: BACK VIEW.

Copyright

small mammal peering into such a recess, on finding itself confronted with so terrifying an object, might well think immediate flight the safest course without further investigation. One British caterpillar, that of the elephant hawk-moth, is similarly furnished with eye-spots so placed that, when the caterpillar draws itself into the attitude which it habitually assumes when touched or alarmed, it looks curiously snake-like; while in other countries there are caterpillars in which a similar likeness is

appears from Colonel Waller-Barrow's statement that the resemblance is particularly close to a certain arboreal bird-eating snake which is common in the same neighbourhood. It would seem to be, humanly speaking, impossible that such a resemblance should be the result of pure accident; or, at least, if the form of the chrysalis and its unusual method of affixment to the twig were in the first case accidents, it seems obvious that they must have been to the benefit of the species and, as such, to have been retained and made permanent. But even in drawing inferences from premises so obvious as these seem to be, it is necessary to proceed with caution. There is said to be in the Himalayas a kind of orchid the blossom of which, hanging as it does at the end of a long, pendulous stalk, presents again the precise fac-simile of a snake's head, and, once more, of a particular snake which is abundant in the same locality. We can readily understand how it may be vastly to the advantage of a chrysalis which is eaten by birds to pretend to be itself a bird-eating snake; but it is less easy to understand wherein a flower profits by a similar make-believe. If in the latter case the resemblance of the flower is purely "accidental," how can we say with certainty that it is not so in the other, especially as we frequently find in the pupae of butterflies and moths (and, indeed, in many things) close resemblances to other natural objects, the similarity to which can be of no sort of service? In the tropical forests of various parts of the world batrachians of different families (as tree-frogs, frogs proper and toads) all have a tendency to develop into typical tree-frogs of identical appearance. If one of the species happened to be notoriously inedible by birds and other animals, we should doubtless conclude that the mimicry of the rest had been resorted to for the purposes of protection; but there is no evidence to support such a view and no rational conclusion to be drawn, except that it is merely the result of the pressure of a similar environment which has impelled all alike in the same direction until all have assimilated to one common type. Protective resemblance has undoubtedly been, and still is, one of the great forces in the shaping of the development of species, assisting in the salvation of many from extermination; but the tendency to see a protective purpose in all resemblances, whether to environment or to other living

creatures, is constantly receiving checks; and it is only as, by observation, we laboriously accumulate knowledge of the ways of life of the wild things, and as we come slowly to understand

better the structure and operation of the sense-organs, especially the organs of vision, in the lower animals, that we can with safety draw deductions in particular cases. H. P. R.

A FAMOUS HOLBEIN.

THE news that the Duke of Norfolk has sold the superb picture of the Duchess of Milan by Holbein—one, indeed, of the great artist's three or four finest works—which has, for so many years, been lent to the National Gallery, has deeply alarmed all lovers of art, lest the short time yet allowed for its acquisition for the nation should elapse before means may be found to retain it in England. Not only on artistic grounds, but likewise on historical ones, it would be an irreparable misfortune if this supreme example of portraiture should leave these shores. For there is scarcely another picture in England which possesses such an interesting and romantic history as this one of the charming young widow of sixteen whom Henry VIII. tried in vain to make his fourth wife. It was at the end of 1537, a month or two after the death of Jane Seymour, that Cromwell wrote confidentially to Hutton, the King's diplomatic agent at Brussels, asking him to look out and report to him if there was any bride suitable for his master among the ladies of that Court. Hutton at once made "as much secret search as the time would permit," and among others strongly recommended the Duchess of Milan, "a goodly personage of excellent beaute," a niece of the Emperor Charles V., and a daughter of King Christian of Denmark. Her union with Henry VIII. would have shown that bygones were bygones, as far as the English King's treatment of the Emperor's aunt was concerned, and that a new and friendly state of things was now established between the two Sovereigns. Accordingly, Sir Philip Hoby, a gentleman of King Henry's Court, was despatched to Brussels, accompanied by "a sarvand of the Kynges Majisties namyd Mr. Hannce"—Holbein in fact—in order that a picture of the Duchess might be made to be shown to the Royal wooer, before he committed himself too far. The day after their arrival an interview was granted by Mary, Regent of the Netherlands, the Duchess's aunt, with whom she was staying, and Hutton, having informed her and the young widow of the purpose of Hoby's and Holbein's arrival in Brussels, explained that the prospects of the proposed marriage could not be better advanced than by the procuring for their master "a perffight picture" "of the form and beauty of Her Grace" by a man "very excellent in making phisanymies." Next day, accordingly, being March 12th, 1538, Holbein came to the Palace, and the verdict given was that he "havyng but three owers space hathe shoid hymself to be a master of that siens, for it is very perfflight."

What he did was doubtless to draw one of those extraordinarily life-like sketches—the delight of all connoisseurs—in black and white, touched here and there with colour, with notes, outlines and suggestions, from which he subsequently painted his finished pictures.

The Duchess's portrait, as thus afterwards painted probably in London, we need not describe. The reproduction here presented, after a photograph, will do that better than any words. We need only say that the black satin dress is lined and trimmed with sable; and that the hands—those wonderful hands, so characteristic and so eloquent of the grace, simplicity, refinement and delicacy of the girlish widow—hold a pair of yellow gloves. The only ornament is a gold bracelet, studded with a single ruby.

The background is dark blue. She is not very beautiful, it is true; but how interesting, how attractive, how graceful does she seem! and how significant and expressive are those large dark eyes beneath the fair brow!

How she appeared to those about her at this time we can gather from what Hutton wrote home to Cromwell—doubtless for Henry's own reading: "She is not so white as the late Queen (Jane Seymour) but she hath a singular good countenance, and when she chanceth to smile there appeareth two pits in her cheeks and one in her chin, the which becometh her excellently well. She is higher than the Regent; a goodly personage of body and competent of beauty, of favour excellent, soft of speech, and very gentle in countenance. She lisps somewhat in talking which does not become her badly." The sight of this beautiful picture made Henry more than ever eager to see and possess the original; and the young widow does not seem to have shrunk from the venture, in spite of the story which made her declare that "having only one head, and not two, she was sorry that she must decline the King's kind proposal." But the matter really rested rather with her uncle, Charles V., than with her; and he, probably owing to Henry VIII.'s excommunication, suddenly became hostile to any alliance, political or matrimonial.

So the match was broken off, the Duchess of Milan marrying a few years after the Duke of Lorraine, and Henry VIII. consoling himself, in rapid succession, first with Anne of Cleves and then with Catherine Howard. But the beautiful picture of the Duchess continued to grace the walls of Whitehall; and it was entered only two or three years after in the catalogue of the King's works of art, in which it is described as: "Item, a greate Table (i.e. panel) with the picture of the Duchyes of Myllayne, being her whole stature." The



THE DUCHESS OF MILAN.

By Hans Holbein.

portrait appears again under a similar title in the Inventory of the Royal Goods, compiled in the first year of the reign of Edward VI.; and we may assume that Queen Mary and King Philip continued to keep it, for they would scarcely have wished to part with the beautiful presentment of one who was a cousin to both of them. With Queen Elizabeth it was otherwise. For many reasons she would have cared but little for the picture; and it was probably through an

exchange or a gift by her to Henry, second Earl of Pembroke of the Herbert line, that it passed out of the Royal Collection. At any rate, it was in his possession in 1574, if not before, when, as we are told by Carel van Mander in his life of Zuccherò, that painter saw it in London. "He was delighted," says Van Mander, "with the portrait of a certain Countess (*sic*) dressed in black satin, life-size, a full-length figure, unusually pretty, and well-painted by Holbein, and kept in Lord Pembroke's house, where he saw it in company with some painters and lovers of art, and took such a delight in it that he declared he had not seen the like in art and delicacy even in Rome; therefore he went away filled with admiration."

How or when it passed from the Pembroke Collection we are never likely to find out; but by 1627, if not earlier, it was already in the possession of the famous virtuoso, Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel. In his house in the Strand Sandrart saw it—indeed, he was shown over the great galleries by Arundel himself—and he describes it as "a portrait of Henry VIII's incomparable beloved one, a Princess of Lorraine." This somewhat inaccurate designation he perhaps took from the inscription on the cartellino in the upper right-hand corner of the picture, which reads: "Christine Daughter to Christierne K. of Denmark and Dutches of Lorraine and hertofore Dutches of Milan"; and which, to judge from the style of writing and other peculiarities, seems to date from the time of James I. At Arundel House it doubtless remained until Arundel's death in 1647, when his vast collection of *articles de vertu* of every sort was divided by his will between his two sons, Henry, Lord Maltravers, afterwards Duke of Norfolk, and Sir William Howard, Viscount Stafford. One might have supposed that the great picture of the Duchess of Milan went direct to the elder branch of the Howard family and had remained ever since a treasure of the ducal line. We find, however, that the Earl of Arundel's widow, Alatheia, who survived him seven years, had many pictures and other valuable works of art, which she bequeathed to Charles Howard of Greystoke Castle. Now it was precisely in a Mr. Howard's house in Soho Square that Vertue, in the first two or three decades of the eighteenth century, saw, according to Walpole, this very beautiful whole-length of the Duchess of Milan by Holbein. One of this line, however, eventually succeeded to the dukedom; and it was, doubtless, therefore, through this channel that the picture came into the possession of its present—or rather, alas! we should now say its late—owner, who so long has generously lent it to the nation. In connection with this picture, it may be worth recording that Henry VIII. had another portrait of the Duchess of Milan,

entered in his catalogue under the simple designation: "Item, a table with the Duchesse of Millayne." This, a comparatively small picture, has survived all the vicissitudes of the Royal Collection, and is still to be seen in the King's private apartments at Windsor Castle. It is altogether an inferior work, and has no real pretensions to be considered the original first draught of the great masterpiece, as the late Sir George Scharf, who discovered it about forty years ago, when it was unnamed, was inclined to think. It is only a half-length, apparently copied by an inferior hand from the drawing from life from which the Duke of Norfolk's picture was painted by Holbein. It exhibits some difference in the costume and some variety in the attitude of the hands, showing also three rings on the Duchess's hand instead of one. ERNEST LAW.

THE CHARCOAL-BURNER.

A RATHER wizened, very shabby, unshaven and grimy little man, in shirt-sleeves, but wearing an ancient hat of the type called "Homburg"—this was the first charcoal-burner I had ever met. He was disappointing, as a



Ward Muir.

"PIT" SHELTERED BY NETTING.

Copyright



Ward Muir.

RAKING OFF OUTER SKIN OF SAND AND STRAW.

Copyright

representative of one of the world's most ancient crafts. Washed, he might have been a mere Cockney; his voice rather added to, than detracted from, that impression. Yes, he was disappointing—until you saw him at his "job." Then you realised that you were in the presence of that now rare creature, an efficient workman. Efficiency seemed to sparkle out of him, as I saw him, later, leaping round his "pit," raking the sand and dirt off the central core of charcoal, flinging on to it bucket after bucket of water, and, a sprite amid volumes of magnificent steam, shovelling on a fresh coating of sand, which would drive the wet vapour inward, and thus damp out, to its uttermost corners, the glowing mass. This task of quenching the "pit" needs a man's wits; it has to be done exceedingly quickly, very thoroughly and at precisely the right moment, or the labour of many preceding hours may be lost. And seeing my friend the burner performing this swift, picturesque and skilled operation, my opinion of him altered, and I forgot the unshaven chin, the generally down-at-heel appearance and the incongruous Homburg hat.

But, of course, charcoal-burning is less romantic than one might be

led to believe from one's perusal of fairy-stories. Charcoal-burning is still carried on in forests in England—my friend had lived in an English forest without seeing a single human being, except his mates, for a fortnight—but the burners one is more apt to meet are those itinerant individuals, who visit farms, up and down Kent and the other hop counties, to make the "coal" for the drying of the hops in the kilns, or "oasts," and these wanderers often labour in a singularly unbeautiful and unsylvan setting. I found my charcoal-burner in the yard of a hop-farm, under the shadow of the conical oasts. Round him were pyramids of old and mossy hop-poles, and in the shelter of one of these pyramids he had erected a tiny gipsy-tent, wherein he slept, when sleep was possible. The old hop-poles were his fuel. Cut into short lengths and piled, with business-like symmetry, into a circular stack, they formed his "pits" (though why the word "pit" should be used for a large excrescence, I know not). In the centre of the stack a hole was left. The stack was covered with an outermost skin of sand and straw; then burning charcoal was thrown down into the central hole, the latter instantly covered also, and, behold, the new charcoal was in process of manufacture. Minute vents in the outer skin of sand allowed the smoke to escape; and the burner can judge by the colour of this smoke how the internal economy of his "pit" is faring. For the object of charcoal-burning is not really to burn, but to treat the wood to what is called, I understand, "smothered combustion." All the sap, the greenness, the smoke-giving properties of the wood, must be extracted; nothing is left but a dry, light, splintery substance, which will burn "with a flame like a primrose," as my friend vividly put it, yet give off no smoke. This quality of smokelessness is what the hop-farmer wants. Charcoal and Welsh steam coal—these, one or other, he must use in the oasts as built at present, or his hops will be defiled by smoke.

My friend the burner was willing to talk, as are most workmen old-fashioned enough to take a pride in themselves and their technique. His father and grandfather had been charcoal-burners; he himself had been born in a burner's hut and brought up to the trade from earliest boyhood. His father

still, in my friend's eyes at any rate, is the fact that the complete pit may be spoilt should an untimely hole be made in its coverture and the air allowed to enter. In a few minutes the wood in the inside bursts into flame and is consumed, like a bonfire. The whole secret of the creation of charcoal is the lack of air and the consequent non-flaming combustion.

Charcoal, said my friend, is bought, not less than it used to be but more. All sorts of chemical industries require it now,



Ward Muir.

THROWING THE WATER ON THE CHARCOAL "PIT."

Copyright.

and require the best, too. We have charcoal biscuits, charcoal tooth-powders, charcoal in electrical apparatus, in filters and a thousand other new-fangled things. The burners are often busy—too busy; though, strangely enough, pay does not appear to be quite what it once was. There still exists a sort of clan of hereditary burners—my friend belongs to this clan—whose headquarters are in the Ashdown Forest district; and, seemingly, unless you have been brought up to charcoal-burning from a tender age, you make hideous mistakes, ruin valuable pits, misjudge the obscure behaviours of various timbers, give way to slumber when you should be wakeful for forty hours on end—and in multitudes of other ways betray yourself as a "bungler," and not the real, initiated craftsman, all of which I felt to be very cheering talk in such days as these, when labouring England seems given over to the incompetent and uninterested. So I came again and again to watch my friend at work in his shelter of netting—the netting being put round a pit to shelter it from wind, which might fan it into flame—and to listen to

him as he described the wide yet curiously local sweep of country through which his wanderings led him. He did not let me go away in the belief that he was a mere tramp, cadging an engagement where he could find it by chance. Not at all. He was "booked up" weeks and months ahead, and he dovetailed in the dates of his fixtures like a "star" of the music halls. Farmers wrote and invited him long before he was wanted, and he turned up to the minute at the appointed place, or refused the offer grandly, as the case might be. In fine weather he took his wife with him on tour, though more rarely now that they had a family. And his little boy—of course, his little boy was to be brought up to father's trade, and one day would make the rounds with him, not as an onlooker, but as an apprentice. "I'll be at so-and-so next week," said my friend, waving a vague hand across the distant downs, "and on the twenty-fourth at Farmer Smith's at so-and-so." On the second of next month—he spoke with an odd precision—he would "drop in on the wife."

Later, he was engaged for a "big London job," which meant, not a job in London, but for a London trader. You could see by the confident look on his dirt-stained face that he was not one of those poor, timid fellows who never know from month to month whether there will be work for them to do. A lifetime of charcoal-burning stretched ahead of him—and then there would be his boy to carry on the tradition. Lucky pair!

WARD MUIR.



Ward Muir.

SMOKE ESCAPING FROM SMOULDERING "PIT."

Copyright.

had slipped when climbing a pit, plunged his leg through the outer crust and had it seared to the bone by the hell of heat within, and had limped with a crutch ever afterwards. My friend told many grisly tales of persons and animals trapped by putting a limb through into a lighted pit. Pigs, sheep and such-like livestock not infrequently stray on to a pit, are caught and cannot escape, and die a horrible death by roasting. Worse



R. Warden Harvey.

DUTCH DOLLS.

Copyright.



TALES OF COUNTRY LIFE.

THE ELDERLY ROMANCE OF MR. HOWARD AND MISS ST. GEORGE,

BY
W. M. LETTS.



AT the moment when she threw three snails into the next-door garden Miss St. George had forgotten that the new tenant was now in occupation. Her mercy would not have conquered a fine sense of honour as to what should not be thrown into a neighbour's garden had she remembered this fact. But for many months the next-door garden had been a wilderness, and Miss St. George had felt herself justified in sending her snails into its weedy borders.

"Now," she would say as she threw them over the wall, "you are going to Siberia. Don't come back again."

On this day, too, she repeated her sentence of exile, and it was with a sense of dismay that she saw a man's eyes gravely gazing at her from the other side of the wall.

"Madam," he said, in a tone that was a little formal, "it is no use to throw your snails over my wall, for I invariably kill them. I have observed that you do it, but it is only fair to warn you that you are sending your snails to instant destruction."

Miss St. George blushed to the roots of her pretty grey hair.

"It was quite inexcusable of me," she answered; "it shall never happen again. But I hate to kill the poor fellows and so—"

"I will kill them for you," he interrupted; "so pray continue to throw them over. You have such beautiful larkspurs that you can't afford to countenance snails. My poor garden is in a very bad way and I see it has a formidable rival in yours."

"Ah! but you have only just arrived. We shall see wonders in a little while," said she, and the tone of her voice implied a sincere interest in her neighbour's garden. He looked down at her with some curiosity. He saw a little lady in a big gardening apron with a straw hat tied by a scarf bonnetwise on her head. There was something so bird-like and dainty about her whole appearance that he under-estimated her capacities for hard work.

She on her part saw an elderly man, grey-haired, a little bald, pleasant-looking when he smiled, but having a certain air of long bachelordom about him.

"You are my neighbour Mr. Howard?" she asked.

"Yes . . . and you are Miss St. George?"

"Yes. I have been here for ten years."

"Ah! I remember that while I was staying at a hotel in Ilfracombe nearly a score of years ago, I met a Mrs. St. George and her daughter. Can you be that daughter?"

"Yes, I am. I remember you now quite well. You sang 'O fair dove, O fond dove,' one night."

"So I did. I remember now that you had a red parasol. Why, how the past comes back to one! It is a long while ago."

Mr. Howard had a direct frankness of speech which was only flattering in the sense that it implied confidence in the sound reasonableness of his neighbour.

"Yes," said Miss St. George, "it was twenty-six years ago. I was twenty at the time."

"Then you are forty-six," said Mr. Howard, and he smiled down at the pretty little face under the straw hat; "well, I am fifty. We are not young any longer, but I daresay we do not feel very old."

"No," she admitted, "I do not feel very old."

At that moment he found another snail, and she heard the crunch of his boot on the gravel. She would have turned away, but he spoke again.

"I should like to call upon you, if I may," he suggested; "as we are going to be neighbours, it would be as well to be acquainted."

Miss St. George had the courtesy of manner which made every man, woman, child or animal feel interesting and important to her. But with her deference to others there mingled a

certain individuality of taste and character. She had been known to snub impertinence, and her politeness could be more awful than the breath of icebergs. But now her manner was cordial. She invited her next-door neighbour to tea that afternoon. At five o'clock he arrived. But his hostess was not alone. She had with her a pretty young cousin whose eyes said plainly that Mr. Howard was an interruption to the confidence she had been about to pour out. She was modern, and courteous as a fine art was unknown to her. She yawned occasionally and looked at the clock.

But Mr. Howard did not see this. He enjoyed himself and he stayed an hour. He found the tea good, and the pretty drawing-room pleased his taste. It was pleasant, too, to talk to Miss St. George; she had no special talent, but she was interested in many things. "An intelligent woman," he thought, and he offered to lend her books and to give her the reversionary interest of various periodicals. At six o'clock he left.

"What an old fossil!" the pretty cousin exclaimed.

Miss St. George laughed.

"Is he, my dear? But I also am an old fossil, you must remember. And two old fossils enjoy a *tête-à-tête*."

"Oh! but you are not an old fossil, Cousin Clemency; you are so young-looking, and you do so much. We never think of you as old."

The girl looked with a genuine admiration at the little lady.

"You are so pretty," she said, bluntly.

Miss St. George kissed her.

"Thank you, dear, I am not at all too old to like compliments. At the same time, I am forty-six. I look it, and I feel it. It has always seemed to me part of the art of living that one should enjoy every age and be true to it. I admire youth, and when you young people come and visit me I enjoy your society to the full; but I am an onlooker, an elderly friend. I am not one of you. I am middle-aged, and I enjoy my middle age."

The younger woman considered her hostess critically. She admired the pretty grey hair, the delicate little face and the neat, small figure; but it was true that Miss St. George did not look less than her age. One could not think of her as an old maid; but she was in all points a maiden lady. A fastidiousness that was sometimes finicking, manners so perfect that they had to be called old-fashioned, and a refinement of speech that was occasionally mincing—perhaps these bespoke her estate.

"I'm sure," said the blunt young cousin, "you've had a lot of lovers in your day, Cousin Clemency, you're still so jolly attractive to men. You just knock 'em down flat."

"Knock 'em down flat"? Oh! my dear child, never literally nor figuratively have I done that. But I had two lovers; one, I think, really wanted me, but then I did not want him, and the other wanted my money, and I did not want him either . . . that is all my romance."

"Don't you regret them now?"

"No; one does not regret having missed two unsuitable marriages. But perhaps I regret a little that I have not known the authentic feeling."

The young cousin took her leave, and Miss St. George sat down at the piano. She did not play very well, but she loved music. She played Grieg's "An den Frühling," a piece that was always a little beyond her skill. After the last chord she sat still, gazing before her.

Human nature has an infinite capacity for romance, though human common-sense never admits this. But Miss St. George had the courage to be an idealist. Cynicism is the convenient mantle of the coward, and she was no coward. She owed frankly that she wished she had some romantic memory to

cherish. The music had stirred this feeling in her, and she regretted that she could not be sad about something.

The Rector, who had been invited to meet Mr. Howard, had just taken leave. It was nearly six o'clock as he disappeared through the gate. The other guests had gone their several ways, leaving empty teacups and crumbs behind them. But Mr. Howard stayed complacently, having the peaceful sense of being a near neighbour.

It was summer, and tea had been laid in the garden in an arbour all overgrown by the sweet-scented, small-flowered clematis that is called *flammula*. It was a favourite flower with Miss St. George, and she loved the time of its bloom.

Although she had only known her next-door neighbour for a year, they had reached an intimacy which made silence quite an untroubled possibility.

But Mr. Howard spoke presently.

"It has been a delightful afternoon," he said. "Your friends are pleasant people, and you know how to make them show their best sides. That is an art. But then you have so many friends, and one sees that you appreciate them. I wonder—"

He paused and helped himself to some cake in an absent-minded fashion.

"What do you wonder?" she asked.

"Oh! when I said that I was talking to myself. From living alone I have got into many bad habits; thinking aloud is one."

"And so I may not know?"

She raised pretty blue eyes to his. Her eyes seemed to hold the youth that her grey hair denied; he looked into them and then laughed.

"Very well," he answered; "but you must forgive my bluntness. I was wondering why you had never married. You seem to me so—what is the word?—something that means capable of making a home."

"I think the fates were not propitious," she said, lightly; "and now I am a very happy old maid."

"Yes, I see you are; but I am sorry for the man who didn't marry you in those old days—the right man, I mean."

"I did not meet him then."

"But afterwards?"

"Perhaps; but don't you think that after forty one folds up such ideas, and puts them away in a drawer in one's writing-case?"

"No," said he; "I think one puts them on the drawing-room mantel-piece and dusts them every day. An elderly romance is like old Dresden china—it needs careful handling, because it is so valuable."

He was silent for a minute; then he said: "That clematis *flammula* is a favourite flower of mine. In the house of my dreams it covers the arbour where I sit and smoke, when I tell my wife the events of the day and give her my infallible opinion on the political outlook."

"It is a favourite flower of mine," she said, rather eagerly; "so is the sweet pea."

"Yes. Oh! I have a hedge of sweet peas in that garden I spoke of. And my wife goes there with her scissors and cuts great bunches for our drawing-room. That is why it always has a scent of flowers."

Miss St. George looked up at him. Her look was always as straightforward as her speech.

"Then I wonder," she said, "that in those old long-ago days when we were young you did not make your dream-house a reality. You must have known someone worthy to sit in your clematis arbour."

"Oh! perhaps," he answered, "but there was never any question of that. I was born a crusty old bachelor."

Miss St. George shook her head.

"No, you were not," she said, quickly.

With a deliberation peculiar to him, his gaze travelled from the flower-beds to her face. He smiled at her.

"Why no, of course I was not," he answered.

"Well, then your mother should have made you marry."

"My mother? She died when I was fifteen."

"I am sorry. But your father?"

"My father died in an asylum. He was insane—so were two of my aunts and my brother. Now you understand."

Miss St. George was impulsive; she laid her hand on his. Her eyes were full of tears.

"Yours is a great sorrow," she said. "I cannot tell you all that I feel. Great sympathy must be silent."

He pressed her hand.

"Yes, I am sure of your sympathy. Now you know why that house I spoke of stands on the road to the stars and not in the world."

She nodded.

"After all, we have our imagination," she said, "and what one imagines is real."

"Exactly. I have the primary idea of that imaginary life; therefore it is even more real than its fulfilment would have been. That, I take it, is sound Platonic philosophy."

He rose to go. It was nearly seven o'clock, the hour when they both dined. He broke off a spray of clematis and Miss St. George gathered him a bunch. He accepted it with a little bow. The pretty cousin would have thought his manner typical of a fossil.

They wandered down the path together. With their outward eyes they were searching the wall for snails, but their inward gaze rested on that house of Mr. Howard's.

"Have you larkspurs in that garden of yours?" she asked, suddenly.

"Yes, of course I have; they grow in the border by the wall. It's an old red-brick wall, you know, and the contrast in colour is splendid. But you must come and see it."

She laughed. It amused her that two such elderly people as themselves should be playing this childish game.

"How shall I know the house?" she asked. "Has it a name or a number?"

"Neither, but of course you'll know it. There's a white gate overhung by a big chestnut tree. You turn in there and you go down the little avenue . . . it curves a little, and there's the house. There's an immense slope of old red roof at one side. But at the front there's a porch full of geraniums. My geraniums are my glory."

"Then I shall come and envy you. And you'll give me tea in the clematis arbour and introduce me to your wife?"

"I'll certainly give you tea. But you and I must have it alone and talk over old times."

"But I shall be anxious to see Mrs. Howard."

They paused by a clump of fiery poker. He was much taller than she, and at the moment she was very conscious of this as he looked down at her.

"Mrs. Howard," said he, "has been a vague lady for a long while. I must even admit that her face has altered several times since I was twenty. But now she is a reality. Yes, she is always the same now, whether she gathers sweet peas or ties up the roses, or whether she sits in my arbour and does her crochet-work."

Miss St. George turned and continued her walk. The silk lining of her grey voile dress rustled as she moved.

"Then I shall hope to meet her," she said again.

Mr. Howard had caught a snail. He looked at it and threw it over the wall.

"When you come she will be there," he said.

They had reached the garden gate. It was open, but there was no one on the road outside. Mr. Howard took her hand to say good-bye, but he held it. "I shall see her there to-night, and then I shall have the boldness to tell her that I love her in grey. To-night she will wear a grey dress of—of *that* sort of material," he glanced at her dress as he spoke.

Miss St. George was very rosy.

"It is voile," she said.

"Oh! well, it is a grey voile dress that she will wear to-night."

When Miss St. George arrived at the door of the Asylum she held a large bouquet of the sweet-scented clematis. The doctor's wife, who saw her from her bedroom window, said:

"Oh! here is that nice little Miss St. George, and she doesn't know."

"I will tell her," answered the doctor, and he went downstairs.

He found her in the pretty drawing-room of the pretty house which sheltered the mentally afflicted. He took her hand and pressed it but was silent, and she enquired after his wife and children, and spoke of the heat of the day.

"I have news for you," he said, at last. "I should have written to-day, but I did not know you were coming. The truth is that Howard died last night. It was very sudden and painless. His heart was affected, you know, and after he had walked in the garden he came in to rest and fell back dead in his chair."

Miss St. George turned towards the window; she spoke with her back turned.

"You have told me very good news," she said. "I am glad, . . . oh! more glad than I can tell you."

His conventionality was for a second taken aback. He thought it good news. Still, it puzzled him a little that she should say this; but he had never known exactly what the bond was between this little elderly lady and the patient who three years ago had come to his private Asylum.

"Of course," he answered, "in these cases one does look at death as a great release. But we shall miss Howard here. We had all grown fond of him. When he was sane he must have been a delightful man. Madness was in his family. He was wise not to marry himself. I believe he has no relations but the cousin who brought him here."

Miss St. George turned to him with her pleasant little smile.

"Will you take me to him?" she said.

"Certainly."

In the sunny room that had been his Mr. Howard lay very still in that aloof dignity which is death. And Miss St. George stood beside him looking down at the face which some months ago had been turned vacantly towards her in an unrecognising stare.

She put out her hand and touched his.

Then she laid the sweet-scented clematis beside him and turned away.

"It grew in my garden," she explained, "and he liked it."

They left the quiet room, and the doctor took his guest downstairs to have tea with his wife. They had expected her to be sad, but they found her cheerful and ready to talk of all their interests. Miss St. George never forgot either the relationships or the tastes of her friends.

When she had gone the doctor said, "What an attractive little woman she is! She belongs to the almost extinct order—Gentlewoman."

"She dresses so well," observed his wife; "how some women always look neat is a marvel. She often reminds me of a little bird—a chaffinch, I think. I wonder what Mr. Howard was to her."

"It was just kindness that made her visit him," said the doctor.

"I don't know; I sometimes thought that there might be some old romance."

"Nonsense, my dear, she must be fifty. She's left her romantic days behind her. When one is fifty dinner is more important than love."

"Oh! yes, married people think so. But she was not married. The single are incurably romantic."

They both laughed.

"She doesn't know the other side," said the doctor's wife, cheerfully.

When Miss St. George had finished her solitary dinner that night she went to the drawing-room and opened the piano. Again the piece she played was Grieg's Spring Song, and again she did not play it very well. Her left hand lost its way in the long upward run before the last chords. Although the springtime of her own life was over, she felt its memory revived by the exquisite wistfulness of the music. "An den Frühling" is not only for the young. It speaks of something that knows no age.

Miss St. George wiped two tears from her cheeks and closed the piano. Then she threw a white shawl round her and went to the garden, followed by her Persian cat, which pursued her stealthily like a shadow.

Her maid Maria saw her from the kitchen window.

"The mistress is quite gay to-night," she remarked. "She's wearing that new grey silk and she was very cheerful at dinner. Perhaps she's had some money left her."

The cook nodded, wisely.

"She's rich relations. It's likely one of them's died," she answered; "besides, it's her birthday to-day."

"Yes, she's fifty. She told me so, but I'd reckoned that for myself before she said it. She keeps her figure wonderful. It surprises me she never married, and her with a nice bit of money."

"Yes, Maria, it always makes me wonder when any woman with a bit of money is left unmarried. For looks may go, but money stays."

"I daresay she was one to pick and choose. Really, I did think one time it would be that poor gentleman next door. But there, he went off his head, so he was no good."

"If they'd married," said cook, "she'd have got his money now he's dead. I wonder she didn't think of that. It seems a pity now."

Miss St. George went to bed early that night. She read for a little while—Mrs. Browning's "Sonnets from the Portuguese" was the book, but soon she felt sleepy and blew out her candle. The moon was full that night, and though her blind was half drawn the moonlight made a square of light close to her bed. But it did not keep her awake.

When her dream consciousness began Miss St. George was walking down a country road. It was chequered with the shade of leaves, with here and there a deep shadow pleasant after the hot sunshine of parts of the road. She was tired, and the thought of rest was delightful to her. But she must not rest yet. She felt vaguely that she must reach her destination first. She was carrying a red silk parasol, a purse and one or two small parcels.

"That's my lace," she said, aloud, "and here are the cigarettes."

She paused and considered this.

"What on earth made me get cigarettes?" she asked of a fat thrush poised on a railing.

She went on further; she passed various gates and looked in at the gardens with mild interest. The sun was very hot; she wished she could find a seat in the shade.

"But then they'd be expecting me," she said, "and I'm sure I'm late."

A turn in the road brought her to a white gate under a chestnut tree. She sighed with relief as she opened it and walked up the avenue. She looked about her with the close attention of proprietorship. She noticed a few weeds and stooped to uproot them. She observed the trimness of the shrubs, the smoothness of the lawn, the brilliance of the flower-beds with keen satisfaction. But she looked about her for someone. A Panama hat that moved among the bushes made her eyes light up with pleasure. She called rather faintly. Her voice was small; she had never shouted even in her childhood. But the owner of the Panama had heard and he came to meet her. He did not hurry. Mr. Howard had never hurried. His movements, like all his ways, were well ordered.

"Here you are at last," he said, cheerfully. "I've been to the gate several times, but I couldn't see you."

"I tried to hurry," she said, "but it was so hot."

When they met he kissed her, but it was the kiss of daily companionship.

"Did you remember the cigarettes?" he asked.

"Yes. I never forget your commissions, do I?"

"No, you never do, my dear. Well, come into the house and rest."

Miss St. George followed him into the cool flower-scented hall. It was all so familiar, but the tiled floor, the blue paper, the engravings, struck her with a new sense of pleasure, and so did the library with its many bookshelves and its big writing-desk.

Mr. Howard drew forward a chair for her. "Mary will bring tea very soon," he said; "I told her you would like it in the arbour."

"Oh, yes, of course I should. Where are the children, John?"

"They are playing cricket with the Rectory children down in the paddock. I believe it's a great match. Anyway, they are having tea at the Rectory, so we shall be alone. I only hope we shan't have visitors."

Miss St. George took off her gloves and smoothed them. She looked at her rings with interest.

"Yes, I hope no one will come," she answered.

"I'll bring out the book," he said, "and read to you while you crochet; and there's a very good article in this review—I want to hear your opinion of it. But we must have tea first."

She rose to her feet and looked down at him.

"How nice it is to be at home," she said; "that is the only pleasure of going out—it is so delightful to come home again."

A quarter of an hour later they strolled down the garden together. "Don't those larkspurs look well against the old red brick of the wall?" said he.

"Yes, the contrast is beautiful."

They reached the arbour, all overgrown and garlanded with clematis flammula.

"What a scent it has!" she exclaimed; "the scent always reminds me of the days when we first met."

"Yes, it reminds me of that too. It is your flower; that is one reason why I love it, Clemency."

She laughed; but there was a happiness much deeper than laughter in her eyes.

"That is quite a lover-like speech," she said, "and we are such an elderly couple—two old fossils, my little cousin would say."

"Still, two old fossils may be happy; they may even be romantic old fossils."

"Last night," she began, "I had such a dreadful dream."

"What was it?"

"I didn't mean to tell you."

"Oh! but you will."

"Well, it was this. I dreamt that you went mad, and then that you died. But I think the worst part was that I dreamt we had never been married at all."

"Dreams are made to be forgotten," he said. Then he took her hand and kissed her. "Here is the reality," he said; "you and I in our own garden, sitting down to a quiet tea together; and after that some quiet reading, and then the children rushing home to tell us who won the match. And then we must really water those chrysanthemums. This dry weather keeps one busy. Are not all those things realities?"

Miss St. George sat up in bed. Maria had wakened her by drawing up the blind. "It's a lovely morning, ma'am," said she.

"So it is. But, Maria, you have just interrupted such a pleasant dream."

"Indeed, I'm sorry, ma'am."

But Miss St. George laughed.

"One must wake up some time," she said, "and, as you say, it is a lovely morning: I mustn't miss that."

She took her teacup from the maid's hand, and Maria went downstairs.

"I do believe you're right, and she's had money left her," she said to the cook.

"Yes, that lively way—more cheerful even than usual; it must be money," was cook's conclusion.

BIRDS OF PREY IN THE HIGHLANDS.

THE distribution of birds of prey in the Highlands at the

present day furnishes a striking object-lesson in the effects of protection on any given species. In the middle of last century, when game-preservation as a source of income began to be considered an asset of the country, there were few sportsmen who realised how easily and quickly any non-migratory bird could be exterminated. At that period birds of prey were unquestionably too numerous, and game could scarcely have been expected to flourish under such conditions.

Our forefathers, perhaps better sportsmen than their descendants, skilled in all manner of woodcraft and content with small bags obtained by their own unaided efforts, were more tolerant and forbearing towards the birds and beasts of prey than we have since proved ourselves to be. The rising value of sport, however, marked the commencement of a relentless warfare against all marauders other than man himself, a warfare which has continued to the present day and threatens to exterminate many of our most interesting species, which, once vanished, can never be replaced. The position of many of our birds of prey is a matter of the greatest concern to ornithologists and sportsmen alike, for there are few sportsmen who would knowingly exterminate a species whose members are already so few as to cause no concern to game-preservers. The harm done by the few pairs of eagles, peregrines and buzzards which still survive is not worth consideration, and the fact that most of their prey is obtained in the deer forests renders their presence desirable, rather than otherwise, in many of the latter.

Of the British eagles, two species have already vanished, or almost vanished. Experience shows that we cannot hope for migrants to take their place. The sea eagle is now but rarely seen on our coasts, and the fishing eagle, the graceful osprey, is no longer a familiar feature of our inland lochs. On some lone islet or surf-beaten rock an odd pair may survive, but for most of us they are but memories of the past, and never again may we watch them as in days gone by. The golden eagle is the only one remaining to us. For him alone of his race protection came not in



H. B. Macpherson.

YOUNG EAGLE IN EYRIE.

Copyright.

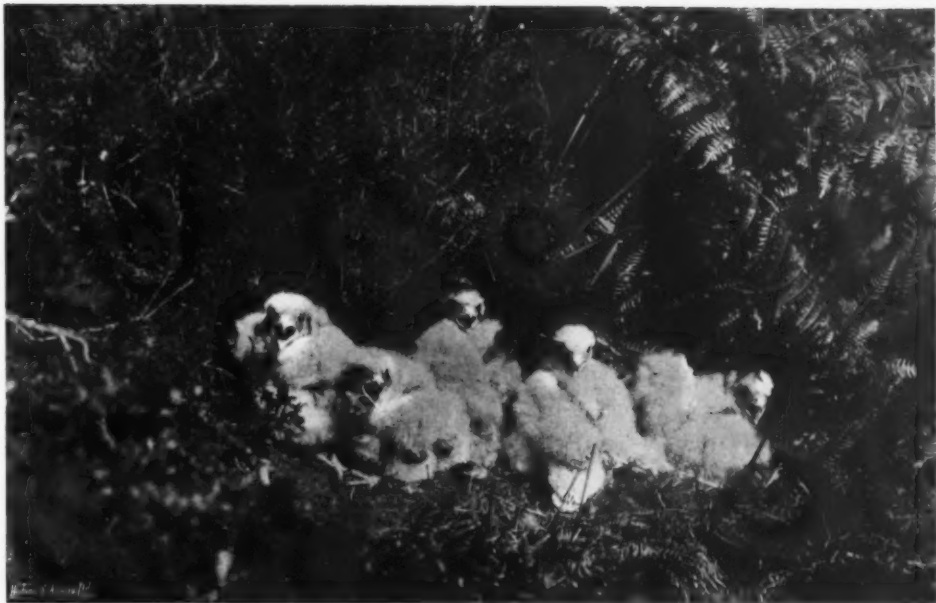
regarded as the signal for its destruction. The buzzard, in appearance closely resembling the golden eagle when on the wing, though easily distinguished by its smaller size, has in the past suffered for the sins of its bolder neighbours, for of all birds of prey this is the least harmful to game; mice, voles and carrion form its diet, and it is probably quite incapable of striking down any game-bird on the wing unless the latter is weakly or wounded. In flight slow and heavy and by nature a coward, common-sense will show us that the character of this species quite belies its predatory

appearance. Yet in spite of these facts, which have been proved times without number, keepers continue to shoot these harmless birds on their migration in autumn, the period when the young birds, driven away by their parents, are seeking fresh quarters. If proprietors would include buzzards in their orders for the protection of eagles something might be gained. The position of this species is at present very precarious in the Highlands. The numbers seen in the autumn are considerably in excess of those bred in this country, from which we must infer that a large number pass across the Highlands from Northern Europe. These migrants, however, are not of the slightest use to us for breeding purposes, and if our native birds are once exterminated it is extremely unlikely that they can again become established in their former haunts. Of all our birds of prey, the buzzard is, at the present moment, most in need of protection. In a few years' time this species will share the fate of the ospreys, unless prompt measures are taken for their preservation.



H. B. Macpherson. YOUNG PEREGRINE FALCON. Copyright

That the peregrine falcon still holds its own is little short of marvellous, when we consider the persecution from which it has suffered. The extension of deer forests, where grouse are not always required, has provided fresh sanctuaries where these were most needed, and of them the noblest of our British falcons has taken full advantage. Some proprietors accord this grand bird the same protection as they extend to the eagle, and to them the thanks of bird-lovers are due. To some extent the migratory habits of the species are in its favour, and falcons are little in evidence at their nesting haunts in the shooting season. Their numbers are undoubtedly reinforced by a large number of migrants from time to time, but it is very doubtful to what extent the breeding pairs are recruited from these. The extreme wariness of the peregrine during the autumn and winter is in marked contrast to its behaviour at the eyrie, where, in my experience, it is by far the boldest of our birds of prey, often swooping past within a few yards of the intruder's head. From this fatal habit it falls an easy victim to the keeper, and in the absence of orders to protect them,



H. B. Macpherson.

THE MERLIN'S NEST.

Copyright.

decade. There is probably no other instance on record of the extinction of a common species in so short a space of time. The kite was at one time the most common of our birds of prey, and now a few old nests are the only relics which our woods possess of these beautiful birds. Yet if the example of the kite serve as a warning and an example of what persecution can accomplish, the sacrifice will not have been in vain.

Of the Greenland falcon and the rough-legged buzzard, wanderers from Northern Europe, we need say little save that their visits are tolerably frequent, but there is not the least chance of either remaining to breed. The hobby and the honey buzzard, though the Southern Counties of England can claim them as breeding species, have never within my knowledge nested in the Highlands. The sparrow-hawk has earned an unenviable reputation in game preserves, in dash, courage and audacity ranking with the peregrine himself. This species is very migratory in its habits, and I think there is little fear of its extinction, as the breeding pairs seem to be recruited from migrants in the spring.

Little can be said in favour of the sparrow-hawk, and as a woodland species it undoubtedly is responsible for great



H. B. Macpherson

MERLINS.

Copyright.

the latter can hardly be blamed for destroying such destructive birds. It would be useless to attempt to gloss over the faults of the peregrine. I have myself seen the tiercel returning to the eyrie with a full-grown cock grouse in his talons, which he deposited upon a neighbouring ledge that served as a ladder for the clamorous young demons which awaited his return. In spite of this, however, we may appeal for toleration, if not on the grouse moors, at least in all forests where grouse are not required. At present there is no immediate fear of this species becoming extinct, and so long as they are protected in the forests the bold flight of this grand bird will be familiar to all whose lives are spent among the mountains. Fortunately, it has no love for carrion, and the baited fox-trap, which so often lures the buzzard and the eagle to their doom, has attractions for this free-booter of the air.

In Saunders's Manual we find the statement that in Scotland the kite still survives in a few localities. This was in 1889, but within a very few years it was undoubtedly extinct. It is, alas, a fact that no pair has bred in the Highlands within the last



H. B. Macpherson.

THE KESTREL'S EYRIE.

Copyright.

destruction among the smaller birds, its diet consisting mainly of feathered creatures. It seldom takes the trouble to pursue mice or voles.

Two other species claim our attention—the kestrel and the merlin, both of which the writer has turned out in considerable numbers during the last few years. It is, indeed, a treat for the bird-lover to see these lesser falcons losing their fear of man day by day, to watch them from the window hunting mice in the meadows below, hovering, perhaps, within a few yards of the watcher, then pouncing with lightning swoop on some hapless vole, pausing to devour their prey before one's very eyes. To naturalists, the fact that the writer had three kestrels' nests under observation in 1908 in a small pine wood may be of interest, as showing that there is comparatively little antagonism between individuals of this charming species. In the case of one of these the bold behaviour of the adult was conspicuous, and the female would almost allow me to handle her on the nest. It was conjectured that she was one of those liberated in the previous year; one of a brood which had become exceptionally tame before being released. With certain exceptions the kestrel is always harmless to game. Sometimes, however, a pair living on the hill may make a practice of taking young grouse. The remedy is obvious, and they must be destroyed in the interests of the moor; but it would be a sin to destroy all the members of a



H. B. Macpherson. YOUNG TAWNY OWLS. Copyright.

species for the crimes of a pair of malefactors. In the case of ninety-nine nests out of a hundred the kestrels will be found to be bringing fur—i.e., mice, voles, etc.—to the young, and the benefit thus conferred on farmers is enormous.

With merlins this is by no means the case, and young grouse are often the principal food of the family; but at no other period of the year are they destructive to game. Owing to the fact that they nest on the ground and in the most secluded places they are not easy to locate, and to this they often owe their safety. The numbers of kestrels in the Highlands are apparently on the increase, and it seems now to be generally recognised that they are worthy of encouragement. Both kestrels and merlins are to some extent migratory, and the latter seem less able to fend for themselves when the ground is covered with snow, departing southward at the approach of winter. It is a curious fact that grouse are aware that the kestrel is harmless, and that the cock grouse will boldly attempt to drive the "wind-hover" away from nest or brood should the little falcon approach too near when hunting for mice. On the approach of the peregrine, however, he crouches close to the ground, well knowing that no courage will avail him here.

A few words in conclusion as to the owls, of which we need only consider three species—the tawny, the long-eared and the



H. B. Macpherson. YOUNG LONG-EARED OWL. Copyright.

short-eared, for the barn-owl, common in the South, is a *rara avis* in the Highlands. The appearance of the short-eared owls in autumn marks the approach of winter, and the regularity with which they arrive at the time of the flight has earned for them the name of the woodcock owl. A few of these remain to breed with us, and in time more may be induced to follow their example if they are carefully protected. Highland keepers are



H. B. Macpherson. TAWNY OWL. Copyright.

not, as a rule, vindictive towards owls, but the tawny species has sometimes caused annoyance where pheasants are reared by knocking the birds off their perches at night. This, however, is comparatively rare. The long-eared owl is more at home in daylight than its tawny cousin. In a nest which the writer had under observation, mice were brought by the male to the female during the daytime as soon as the hatching-time approached. How she managed to inform him that she could not hunt for herself is one of the mysteries of Nature, for previously he had shown her no such attention.

IN THE GARDEN.

THE BOG GARDEN.

WHEN a marshy piece of ground exists in a garden, or when a low-lying position occurs in the vicinity of a stream or lake, it may be turned to profitable account and transformed from a dreary waste to a decidedly ornamental feature by converting it into a bog garden and planting it with those things that rejoice in rich, marshy ground. In such a situation many charming plants may be grown which are denied to people who have no such place, providing the necessary work is given to keep it in order. It must be remembered that a bog garden to be a success will give quite as much work as, or rather more than, a piece of dry cultivated land half as large again. Rank weeds will grow with great rapidity and smother choice plants if not closely watched, and a great deal of the weeding will of necessity be hand-weeding. Both to assist in cleaning the ground and to enable people to get about among the plants, a system of stepping-stones should be adopted, not continuous, but of irregular placing, with dwarf-growing plants in between. These stones should be placed high enough to make them easily seen, but should not be too far out of the ground to be an eyesore. Here and there the grass should be allowed to grow into the bog, so that a natural and uneven outline of grass and plants will occur.

In placing the plants a system of grouping should be adopted, varying the size and shape of the groups as far as possible. Large and small plants should be studied, so that, while large and small growing subjects are distributed through the garden, they are so placed that dwarf ones are not hidden. A group of Gunneras, for instance, may be placed within easy distance of the margin, just as well as near the middle; but a dwarf *Primula* ought not to be placed right behind it, though the latter might be very effective if planted in a large group 10ft. or 12ft. from dry land. It is, of course, impossible to mention anything like all the plants that are suitable for a bog garden, but in the following lines attention is directed to some very beautiful subjects.

The Iris family, for instance, offers a number of delightful subjects. Nothing is more beautiful than a large mass of *I. lævigata*, or *I. Kämpferi*, as it is frequently called. The flowers of this Japanese plant are very large, borne on stalks 2ft. to 3ft. in height, and are white, mauve or blue in colour. An easily-grown plant is found in *I. sibirica*, which has blue flowers, and another showy plant is the common yellow Flag, *I. Pseud-acorus*. The Buttercups have several representatives; among the best are the double form of *Ranunculus aconitifolius*, commonly called "Fair Maids of France," and *R. Lingua*, the Spearwort. The Marsh Marigolds are close relatives of the Buttercups; the common one, *Caltha palustris*, is very pretty when in bloom, but has to give way for general effect to its double-flowered variety, while the rare *C. polypetala*, a strong-growing plant with large leaves and flowers, is a worthy addition. *Rodgersia pinnata*, an ornamental, large-leaved plant from China, and *R. podophylla*, from Japan, are two strong-growing decorative plants which are deserving of prominent positions, while for the background the stronger-growing species of *Polygonum* can be used. Recent introductions have added several very useful *Senecios* to the list, and such sorts as *S. clivorum*, with immense leaves and large inflorescences of golden flowers, *S. ligularia* var. *speciosa*, *S. veitchianus* and *S. wilsonianus*, all strong-growing, free-flowering plants, should be planted. *Primulas*, such as the charming little *P. rosea* and the large-growing *P. japonica*, are excellent subjects, and, in the case of the latter especially, good things to naturalise. *Gunnera manicata* forms a noble specimen when it is given good soil and plenty of room for development. In good form the leaves may be anything from 8ft. to 11ft. across. Insectivorous plants may be introduced about the outskirts of the bog in company with sphagnum moss. *Sarracenia purpurea* thrives in the Southern Counties and forms fine leaves, while *S. flava* and *S. psittacina* can be tried. The Sundews or *Droseras* should only be planted in those places where no coarse plants will overgrow them, as all are very tiny; *D. intermedia*, *D. longifolia* and *D. rotundifolia* are hardy. *Pinguicula vulgaris*, the "Bog Violet," is another charming little insectivorous plant

With all these species hatching is irregular, one egg being frequently hatched some days before or after the rest. The photograph of young tawny owls reproduced shows this clearly, the bird on the left being considerably the larger of the three.

In mentioning owls under the heading of birds of prey at the present moment, my object is to draw attention to the possibility of a plague of mice and voles in the Highlands. Never have these vermin been so plentiful within the memory of man, and owls alone can save farmers from heavy loss of crops and grain.

H. B. MACPHERSON.

which needs a corner to itself, unmolested by large-growing things. *Trillium grandiflorum* is a choice, white-flowered American plant which is more at home in boggy ground than in drier land, while the various *Cypripediums*, particularly the Moccasin-flower, *C. spectabile*, are among the choicest of all bog-loving plants. Other useful *Cypripediums* are *C. Calceolus*, *C. macranthum*, *C. acaule* and *C. pubescens*. The common "Purple Loosestrife," *Lythrum Salicaria*, and its rose-coloured variety are very ornamental. As they grow to 5ft. in height they should be planted a few feet back from the margin. The Bog-bean, *Menyanthes trifoliata*, should be placed in one of the dampest positions; it is always popular when covered with its white or pinkish fragrant flowers. A few other plants for the bog garden are: *Carexes* in variety, the Flowering Rush, the Royal Fern, the Arrow Head, the Sweet Flag, the Reed-maces, *Cladium Mariscus*, various Rushes and *Mimulus lutea*. Shrubs ought not to be omitted, and space should be afforded for Willows, particularly those with red and yellow stems; the Bog Myrtle or Sweet Gale, *Myrica Gale*, *Andromeda polifolia*, various Alders, and a few Poplars if space permits. The Alders and Poplars should, however, only be introduced where a large space exists. Although this selection by no means exhausts the list of plants suitable for boggy ground, sufficient names have been mentioned to show what a wealth of material we have.

B. D.

THE DIERVILLAS OR WEIGELAS.

DURING the months of May and June, the shrubs known to botanists as *Diervillas* and to most nurserymen and gardeners as *Weigelas* do much to brighten up the fronts of shrubberies, and where whole beds are devoted to them in comparatively large gardens the effect is very pretty during the period named. Given a rich soil and an occasional thinning out of the old wood, these shrubs are but little trouble and produce their bell-shaped flowers in abundance. Once a stock is procured, it can be easily maintained or increased, as the *Diervilla* is one of the easiest of our hardy shrubs to propagate by means of cuttings. These are usually taken when the plants are in flower and should consist of green young shoots some 4in. in length. These are inserted firmly in pots of sandy soil to which a little peat has been added, the pots being then plunged in cocoanut fibre refuse in a warm greenhouse and shaded from bright sunshine. The cuttings quickly root, and after they have been hardened by gradual exposure to air they may be planted out in a nursery-bed, where they will make nice little plants before the winter. The hybrid forms are the most ornamental, good varieties being *Abel Carrière*, soft pink and rose; *rosea*, deeper-coloured flowers; and *Eva Rathke*, glowing crimson. A more delicate subject is *D. middendorffiana*, which has yellow flowers. These shrubs grow generally from 4ft. to 6ft. high and belong to the same natural family as the Honeysuckle.

F. W. H.

A BEAUTIFUL BRAMBLE (*RUBUS SPECTABILIS*).

The introductions of late years, chiefly from China, have swollen the list of *Rubi* to a large extent, but it is doubtful whether any of the new sorts will oust the best of the old ones from the position they now occupy in the garden, though some of them are of a distinctly ornamental character. *R. spectabilis* is a well-tried garden shrub, a native of North America, useful alike for the shrubbery and for naturalising in the woodland. It grows from 5ft. to 6ft. in height, with upright, bright brown, spineless, or almost spineless, canes. The leaves are three-parted, large and roughly serrate. The flowers are rosy purple in colour, borne singly from the points of short growths from axillary buds, and are about three-quarters of an inch across. It is the earliest of the species to flower, its blossoms appearing during April and May. The flowers are succeeded by bright yellow Raspberry-like fruits, which are too acid to be pleasant in a raw state, but are stated to be useful for tarts and preserves. Unless the bushes are netted, however, little is seen of the fruits, for birds take them as fast as they ripen. In loamy soil it suckers freely and quickly grows into a large patch.

W. D.

SHRUBS IN MAYTIME.

Now that so many beautiful shrubs are in flower, and that many owners of country places are in London, let us remind them that an afternoon is most pleasantly and profitably spent in going to one of the good shrub nurseries, or, better still, to the gardens at Kew, notebook in hand, to see what are the best of these good garden ornaments, and which of them will best suit the needs of special gardens. Much of the beauty of such a lovely thing as the Japan flowering Apple (*Pyrus Malus floribunda*) is in the way of growth of the pretty little tree. The crimson bud and blushing bloom are charming when seen in any way, but far best on the tree, where the fling and the sway and the poise of it may be enjoyed, and all the little personal ways of the tree that go to make up its individual character and to give a sympathetic and almost human interest to its identity.



LAST-week our perambulation of Charlton House led us to the foot of the staircase in front of doors which admit to the chapel and dining-room. The latter was not so destined by Adam Newton, in whose day it was still the habit to use a small room for the purpose on ordinary occasions, while the hall served for occasions of ceremony. To make the long but rather narrow northern parlour convenient as a modern dining-room, the little tower was thrown into it and the room widened to that extent throughout its length, leaving supporting arches. These form the picturesque vista which is shown in the illustration. The chapel, an unusual adjunct to houses—except the mansions of great noblemen—of Jacobean date and seldom appearing in Thorpe's plans, is the end room of the northern wing having its window in the eastern bay,

and, by way of marking even from the outside the use to which this apartment was put, the window, while in other respects exactly similar to its fellows, has trefoiled heads in the late Gothic manner to its upper lights.

Loftiness being a requisite for the hall, the first landing of the principal staircase takes us only to a set of rooms occupying the north end of the house, the upper part of the hall preventing access to the southern portion—served by its own staircase—except by a gallery thrown across the western end of the hall. It is therefore on the upper floor that Adam Newton placed his suite of reception-rooms, and this accounts for the fact, which the illustration reveals, that the top landing is the most ornate part of the staircase, the walls and ceiling being decorated with very good plaster-work. This does not belong to Newton's time and its date

is uncertain. It is, of course, ridiculous to call it, as has been done in an account of the house, "the work of Grinling Gibbons." He was not a plasterer and he did not work in this style. The fruit and leafage held up by a ribbon knot are a much later treatment of motifs used in his time, and the general decorative scheme is an English adaptation of the Louis XVI. manner, and must date from the Wilson occupation, which began in George III.'s reign. One of the finials on the staircase newels represents the Wilson wolf holding their shield, showing that the staircase was altered by one of the family. When we open the saloon door, however, we return to the almost undisturbed work of the original builder. Eighteenth century inventories show that the wainscoting with which Adam Newton had lined most of his rooms was then removed. The saloon has suffered from this change, and panelling, broken no doubt at intervals by fluted pilasters, such as are still present at the corners of the window recesses, must have existed reaching up to the frieze. Otherwise the room is untouched, and its plaster ceiling and marble mantel-piece are remarkably fine examples in remarkably good condition. The mantel-piece is distinct from any other work at Charlton. There is no trace here of the ordinary English master mason of the age working on his own initiative with the books of De Vries and the other Flemings as his authorities. It has much of the Italian manner and classic purity which Inigo Jones was beginning to introduce. It is the work of a designer who understood proportion and the value of reserve in ornament,



Copyright.

THE GALLERY

"COUNTRY LIFE."



Copyright. THE UPPER LANDING OPENING ON TO THE SALOON AND GALLERY. "COUNTRY LIFE."

and of a sculptor whose supporting statues of Venus and Vulcan, as well as the masks above them, show that he had made a study of the human form in a competent school. But that school was not in Italy, as the cartouches and brackets retain a strong tincture of Low Country influence. This mantel-piece is likely to have been one of the finishing touches, and may not have been set up earlier than the day in the year 1616 when Bishop Buckridge of Rochester came to consecrate the chapel. Now, Nicholas Stone, who was certainly afterwards employed on the Newton Tomb in the church, having learnt his art in Amsterdam, came back to England in 1614, and it is not impossible, judging from the style and technique, that this mantel-piece is one of his early works after his return home and before he served under Inigo Jones as master mason to the King in the construction of the Whitehall Banqueting House. The saloon ceiling is of the type composed of an elaborate panelled design with broad, flat, enriched ribbing, dropping at intervals into pendentives. It may be compared to the contemporary one which was at the Bow and Bromley Palace, and a copy of which is now in the Victoria and Albert Museum over the original panelling of the room. That panelling serves to show us what must have been the effect of the Charlton saloon when



Copyright.

THE WILSON WOLF.

C.L."

so much of the carved work of the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods are not altogether lacking in these mantel-pieces—in

it was wainscotted in a similar manner. In the Bow and Bromley case the ceiling panels have in them the heads of classic heroes or royal arms, while those at Charlton are filled with flat strapwork scrolls studded with rosettes, discs and pyramids. This form of ornament was also used without the panel ribs where the broad flat bands are elaborately interlaced so as to make one great and complex design. Such is the ceiling in the gallery, which occupies on the same floor the whole 76ft. of the length of the north wing. From the saloon it is entered through a lesser apartment called, of old, the white withdrawing-room. It is here that we find one of the two very good and typical Jacobean stone mantel-pieces which are illustrated and which are likely to have been the work of the same hand that carried out the western porch. In the case of the porch, however, the human form is not brought into requisition, whereas it is largely used in the mantel-pieces, both for the caryatides which support the upper and lower friezes and for the sculptured bas-reliefs or detached figures which illustrate subjects of classic mythology, Biblical history or allegorical story. The primitive views on anatomy and the somewhat barbaric treatment common to



Copyright.

ON THE FIRST LANDING.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



"COUNTRY LIFE."

THE SALOON.

Copyright.

contrast to that in the saloon—but they are decidedly more thoughtful in design and more expert in handling than many that have appeared in these pages. Another good feature of the white withdrawing-room is its plaster frieze, which shows the more Italian and ambitious character that the English plasterers then gave to this vertical portion of their domain in contrast to the horizontal field presented by the ceiling. Its arabesque scrolls,

ornamented with the flat strapwork which the Charlton plasterers used so freely. Adam Newton did not fail in the customary practice of introducing heraldry into his ceilings. His own arms appear in the gallery, while those of his Royal masters decorate the ceilings of the embayed windows of the saloon. In that which faces west the arms and supporters of King James are displayed; in the one opposite are the ostrich



Copyright.

IN THE SOUTH-EAST BEDROOM.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

ending in masks and birds' heads, are well composed and modelled. Similar cornices may be found at Audley End and Bramshill, and the same men may have produced them, for those houses were in hand at the same time as Charlton. Of a very different and more unusual type is the frieze in the saloon, which is composed of framed panels, both the framing and the panels being

feathers of the Princes of Wales, of whom Newton served two. When Henry died, he had some hope and claim to have his secretarial skill and experience transferred to the younger brother's service. But Charles's tutor, Thomas Murray, considered that the precedent of Newton passing from tutor to secretary was a far better one to follow, and his view carried the



Copyright.

IN THE SALOON.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



Copyright.

IN THE WHITE DRAWING-ROOM.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

day. Newton had to be satisfied with the less influential but also less onerous post of treasurer. This gave him more time for residence at Charlton (though he was often with the Court and in London), which he appears to have had ample means to complete and inhabit. Indeed, he felt himself in a financial position to give up the Durham Deanery and accept a baronetcy in 1620. He did not relinquish his church preferment without his successor making it worth his while, and so he had a sum in hand to pay for the title of honour, which he enjoyed for ten years, and then died and was buried in Charlton Church. His son, Henry, was a minor at this time. Very soon after he came of age and had married the elder daughter of the Thomas Murray who had been Prince Charles's secretary, he fell on difficult times, for the Civil War broke out. He raised a troop of horse on his King's behalf and fought at Edgehill in 1642. With London and its neighbourhood in the Parliament's hands, this meant the sequestration of Charlton, which he dared not approach, though his wife and her relations were allowed to live there. They seem to have been friends of Thomas Howard, one of the sons of the Earl of Suffolk, builder of Audley End. Thomas Howard, who obtained the barony of Escrick, sided with the Parliament, and so was able to use his influence to obtain for Lady Newton the continued use of Charlton House and a sufficient maintenance. Not only did she spend her summers there, but was joined in 1644 by her mother and sister and by the Howards, with the result that a little lovers' tragedy took place in this quiet rural spot while the great national tragedy was being played in the country at large. The Escrick Howards were poor, and the father, wishing his son, Thomas, to marry well, "sent for him out of France with the intention to marry him to sum rich match that might improve his fortune." Instead of that he spent his time at Charlton falling in love with the penniless Anne Murray, who long afterwards wrote an account of the affair, wherein she draws herself as an exemplar of worldly wisdom and lofty purpose and the young man as an impetuous fool. She knew her mother would be furious if Lord Escrick's kindness to the family was repaid by the blighting of his son's worldly prospects, and she held aloof, giving occasionally quite motherly advice. But one day he succeeded by a trick in getting her alone in a sequestered garden alley, and then he declared that if she remained unkind he would "go immediately into a convent." Here was a quandary for a moral and Protestant young miss! She decided that "religion was a tie upon mee to endeavor the prevention of the hazard of his soule." This high aspiration seems to have led to a large amount of surreptitious philandering during the pleasant summer months. With the chill October days the matter came to the parents' knowledge and there was a scene. Anne Murray was denied her liberty, and her sister's maid was appointed to be her guardian while preparations were made in London to send young Howard back to France. The day he set out to take ship he induced a "Mr. T.," in whose charge he was placed, to allow him to ride round by Charlton. Anne, who, as her lover was supposed to be on his way, was no longer closely watched, is suddenly alarmed by her own and very sympathetic maid rushing in with the words "I believe you are y^e most unfortunate person living, for I thinke Mr. Howard is killed!"

The estate had been placed by Parliament in the hands of a tenant of puritanical views, who was also to watch in case the owner attempted to pay his wife a secret visit. Seeing horsemen lurking mysteriously around, this tenant obtained assistance and suddenly fell upon the supposed enemy of the Parliament, and dealt him a stunning blow. At this moment a servant from the house, favourable to the lovers, came up, explained matters, took the injured man to the ale-house, and went to acquaint Anne of her lover's accident and recovery and to press her to meet him in the little corner garden-house which was illustrated last week. The spot would not do, as it lay within view of her mother's windows, and the cellar was preferred. The two servants in the secret and young Howard's very accommodating companion occupied one end



Copyright.

IN THE DINING-ROOM.

"COUNTRY LIFE"

while the lovers dallied at the other, the extremely conscientious Anne being blindfolded because she had promised her mother not to "see" her lover. They interchanged vows of undying affection, and then she "called for a bottle of wine and giving Mr. T. thanks for his civility and care drunk to him wishing a good and happy journey to Mr. H." That journey was happy in this respect, that it quite cured Thomas Howard, and he came home to take no notice of Anne and to marry according to his father's wishes in 1646. Anne Murray decided "he was unworthy of her anger and concern," and during the succeeding ten years had a strange career, political and amatory. Then she married an elderly Scotch widower, settled down to a humdrum life, and wrote on religion and on her experiences. Her marriage took place at

Charlton House, whither her brother-in-law, after compounding for his malignancy, had returned in 1647. Soon after that he inherited the Puckering estates, which mostly lay in Warwickshire, and, the Civil War having somewhat crippled his own fortune, he decided on moving to that county and selling Charlton. John Evelyn's home, Sayes Court, was only a few miles from Charlton, where he often visited; and under date of September 7th, 1656, we find this entry in his Diary: "I went

to be in the fashion after the Restoration. Repairs were needed, and all the fine leaden rain-water-heads, except one, were renewed, and bear the Ducie arms and the date 1659. He had married a daughter of the Lord Seymour of Trowbridge, to whose issue the Somerset dukedom afterwards came, and he was proud of the alliance. Hence the number of the coats of arms of this family which appear, together with Ducie connections, in the stained glass of the windows of the gallery. The same

heraldry is again found in one of the bedrooms on a black and white marble mantel-piece. There are several black marble mantel-pieces at Charlton, that in the hall being of very dignified proportions but of great simplicity. Such also is the one in the room now known as the Dutch bedroom, which occupies on its south side the same position in reference to the saloon as the white drawing-room does on its north side. It seems to have been a favourite apartment with Sir William, who was created Lord Downe at the Restoration. Its eastward windows look on to the road which leads to the then lonely stretch of Blackheath; and, as his lordship one day sat by the fire, the story goes that in the unbroken and highly polished surface of the mantel-piece—well shown in the illustration—he saw a robbery being committed on the heath. He at once gave the alarm, his servants rushed out and we are assured that the thieves were secured.

Lord Downe had no children, and on his death in 1679 his estates passed to a niece, wife to Edward Moreton, and from them are descended the Earls of Ducie. They seem to have had country predilections and to have preferred Tortworth to Charlton, which shortly passed into the possession of Sir William Langhorne. He was an East India merchant who had recently returned from his Governorship of Madras with money to invest in English real estate. A Londoner and the son of a Londoner, he did not wish to go far afield and went for his two estates not further than Hampstead and Charlton. The latter manor became his place of residence and, like his predecessor, he was content that it should retain its ancient aspect. Some painted deal wainscoting in a room which tradition states to

be haunted is one of the few interior tokens of his occupation. Outside his initials appear on one of the stable gables—though without any change in its style—and on the very charming octagon lead cistern, used as a garden fountain, of which an illustration appears. Though twice married, he left no heir of his body, and by his will Charlton was left to his elder sister's son, Sir John Conyers and his male heirs, failing which to his younger sister's son, William Games and his male heirs. It is curious that there should have been this limitation to the male line in these two cases, whereas the final remainder is to "My kinswoman Margaret Maryon," with no such limitation. As a result, it was to Mrs. Maryon that both Charlton and Hampstead fell in 1732. Born in 1654, she was the widow of Joseph Maryon, rector of White Roding in Essex, and lived till she was ninety-one, when her son, John, also rector of White Roding, succeeded. In due course the Langhorne inheritance came to his great-niece, Jane Weller, whose marriage in the chapel at Charlton House to Sir Thomas Spencer Wilson brought the estates to that family in 1777. The Wilsons are a Yorkshire family, two of whose members moved south to seek their fortunes in the sixteenth century. One of them, Dr. Thomas Wilson, was an earlier lay dean of Durham than Sir Adam Newton, and



Copyright.

A CHIPPENDALE BED.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

to take leave of my excellent neighbour and friend Sir Henry Newton and lady now going to dwell at Warwick." As Sir Henry Puckering he appears in the annals of the Midland county till the century ended, but he is of no further concern to the historian of Charlton. It was another friend of Evelyn's who became the purchaser of that estate. Sir William Ducie was a son of Sir Robert Ducie, who had made a great fortune in London, of which he was Lord Mayor in 1630, having received a baronetcy in the previous year. He was one of Charles I.'s chief financial agents, a position which cost him dear, as the civil wars prevented the repayment of loans said to amount to £80,000. This did not prevent his purchase of the Tortworth and other estates in Gloucestershire and his leaving £400,000 at his death. Even as a younger son, William Ducie was a collector of works of art and was one of the "virtuosos" with whom Evelyn foregathered. But his elder brother's death in 1657 made him a very rich man, who could well afford himself a fine seat in close touch with London as well as distant Tortworth. Luckily, he considered that it would perfectly well serve its purpose in its Jacobean garb, and he did not feel constrained to give it that more Palladian aspect which was affected by all those who wished

he became Secretary of State to Queen Elizabeth. His cousin, John, settled in Sussex, and acquired considerable property which came to his son William, who was seated at Eastborne Place, and was created a baronet at the Restoration. After him, the family fortunes tended to decline. Part of the property went into the female line, and the fourth baronet was constrained to sell the Eastborne estate in 1723 to Sir Spencer Compton, who gave it the name of Compton Place, and from whom it eventually descended to the Dukes of Devonshire. The fourth baronet's younger son, Thomas, entered the Army and saw much service in the Jacobite Rebellion of 1745, and in the Austrian Succession and Seven Years' Wars, when his gallantry at the battle of Minden was mentioned in despatches. He succeeded his brother in 1760, but was a poor man till his marriage with the Charlton heiress. Charlton House, after Sir William Langhorne's death and until the time of Sir Thomas's marriage, had been occupied by a series of tenants. It was for many years the residence of the first and second Earls of Egmont, and Charlton Church has remained the burial-place of that family. Two of Sir Thomas Wilson's daughters married sons of the second Earl. From the elder Lord Arden the present holder of the earldom is descended. The younger was that clever lawyer whom Pitt thought much of in his early days, and who as the Right Hon. Spencer Perceval became Prime Minister in 1809, and remained so until an assassin's bullet closed his career in 1812. Five generations of Wilsons have owned and inhabited the house which Sir Adam Newton built 300 years ago, and all have shown remarkable appreciation of its ancient character. It has thus come through all revolutions of taste and style with little change, and it remains one of our very best samples of the manner in which wealthy subjects housed themselves at the time when Scotland gave us a king. Although modern requirements have made alterations and additions a necessity, the tenth and eleventh baronets have succeeded in adding to the accommodation without any sacrifice of architectural charm and archaeological interest. All structural repair and decorative renovation called for by the ravages of time have been carried out in most laudable fashion. Much fine old furniture and objects have been added; the garden and grounds have had additional value given to the ancient features which they possessed, and no visitor can fail to be struck by the taste and intelligence shown in the adequate and appropriate maintenance of this choice inheritance. T.

WILD COUNTRY LIFE.

COOTS AND SWANS.

IN his article on the nesting of the coot in the issue of COUNTRY LIFE of April 17th, Mr. Bickerton quotes the old maxim that if you wish to have water-fowl on your lake you should encourage coots and keep no tame swans; and he speaks also of the conspicuous lack of the traditional wariness of the coot in the particular pair of which he wrote. I also know coots which are simply ridiculously tame, and the conjunction of those birds with swans in the well-known injunction has interested me before now. Of course, swans are not friendly to water-fowl in general. Anyone who has kept them and watched them knows how they harry other birds upon the water and how many young ducklings they can kill. But the immediate point of interest is that swans seem to have a peculiar dislike of coots.

NEIGHBOURS ON A LAKE.

There is a small piece of water on which one pair of swans breed annually, as well as two or three pairs of coots, several pairs of moorhens, a

pair, and sometimes more, of dabchicks and usually one pair of wild duck. The water is large enough so that the last named can keep well away from the proximity of the swans' nest; and they do so and seem to jog along comfortably enough. I have seen the swan hunting the mallard back to his proper end of the lake, but in a perfunctory fashion, obviously without malice or personal feeling. To the dabchicks and moorhens the swans seem entirely indifferent. If one of the moorhens comes squattering about too near the nest when she is sitting, the pen may stand up and expostulate threateningly, and I have never seen the smaller fowl trust themselves within striking distance of the jack; but they feed unconcernedly a few yards from him and he pays no attention to them. But with the coots it is another story.

INVIDIOUS DISTINCTIONS.

If a coot ventures to come near the particular patch of reeds in which the swans are nesting, both birds wax furious. The pen comes down from the nest and goes for the intruder, while the jack hurries home from wherever he may be to join in the chase. Moreover, at all odd times in the day the male swan is chasing coo's. It bothers him to think that they are in the water. Their mere existence appears to annoy him; and he constantly herds them out on the bank and continues to pursue them over land. On one side the water is separated by, perhaps, some 30 yds. of land from a high brick wall, and the intervening space is dotted with trees. The swan spends a large part of his time driving the coots ashore on this side and then hunting them among the tree trunks. On one occasion he was driving the coots about in this way, working them down parallel to the shore, when I came to meet them; and when I planted myself with my legs wide apart between two trees, one of the coots ran between my feet rather than turn



Copyright

THE DUTCH ROOM.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

Where Lord Downe saw the robbery being committed on the Heath reflected in the polished black marble mantel-piece.

and face its pursuer. Several times they have passed within a yard or so of me, showing an entire indifference to my presence and a complete lack of "wariness." The moorhens, on the other hand, keep well away from a human presence; while one's mere appearance against the skyline is enough to send the dabchicks under water.

AN UNWELCOME INTRUDER.

There must be some reason for this peculiar antipathy of these particular swans to the coots, and it would be interesting to know if it is universal.

One might almost imagine that the swans knew that other water-fowl are supposed to like the neighbourhood of coots, and, as the swans prefer privacy, they are determined not to have any coots messing about to bring other water-fowl there. But the coot is also objectionable to some other birds. Once, when watching a pair of great crested grebes at their nest-building (a fascinating operation), I saw a coot come strolling along and, without paying any attention to the grebes, climb out on the islet made by the nest and deliberately sit down in the half-completed home. It annoyed the two grebes excessively; but though the latter can on occasions be unpleasant antagonists for other birds, at least in the open water, neither of

themselves sometimes ferociously. For all their sanctimonious appearance, they would probably be ugly customers in a rough-and-tumble fight with anything of their own weight. It may be only that the swans take the black livery and white face of the coot as a reflection on their own taste in having their plumage white and their beaks black; but there is probably some sounder and less human reason for their enmity.

THE TIMELY NIGHTINGALE.

In spite of the "backward spring," the gorgeous weather which began with the Easter Week brought most of the summer birds here well ahead of the dates at which they arrived last year. The nightingales were singing in my shrubbery on April 13th, whereas last year the first note heard was on May 1st. Last year it will be remembered that it turned bitterly cold on the Saturday before Easter, April 18th, with heavy snow on the following days and continued storms and frosts until the 29th. While the advanced guard of the summer migrants had come before the bad spell, the great army was held back by those ten dreadful days until the very end of the month. This year, while the advanced guard seemed late in coming, the warm days of mid-April brought over great bodies of most of the visitors at least two weeks ahead of the date of their coming in 1908. And how whimsical the weather is, as one compares one year with another!

MARCH DUST AND APRIL SHOWERS.

It was only last year that, after a succession of dry Marches, I remarked in this column that in the old days kings must have been ransomed cheaply, because there must surely be few years when the peck of March dust was not easily obtainable. And lo! this year one might have hunted the whole of this county of Cambridgeshire on every day in March and failed to collect a thimbleful. There was plenty in February. That "fair maid" neglected entirely her proper business of filling dykes, and the roads in her keeping were so dry for a large part of the month that every passing motor-car raised clouds that would have done credit to August. So March had to do February's work, and when April began it looked as if Nature had adopted a daylight-saving scheme of her own and set her clock back a month, so that we should have to go through the year getting up in May and calling it June, getting up in June and calling it July, and so on indefinitely. Then came the incredible Easter weather, and, though even now the vegetation has not quite caught up (for our tulips and honesty and wallflowers and forget-me-nots are all a week or two late in coming into blossom), the summer birds are here and the spring insects are abroad betimes.

THE LITTLE OWL AS PET OR PEST.

I see that the accusation is circumstantially made that the little owl is a destroyer of young chickens. There appears to be no doubt that in this one case a little owl was the culprit; but let us hope that chicken-killing does not prove to be a general propensity of the family. The little owl is such an engaging, fluffy little thing, with its plaintive note and its trick of bobbing its head, and so

much trouble has been taken to encourage its increase in England, that it will be lamentable if it turns out to be a pest and has to be destroyed again. Let us for the present believe that this one owl was for some reason incorrigibly and exceptionally vicious, and had developed a wicked taste for chicken's brains from mere individual naughtiness—a black sheep in an otherwise exemplary family.

GREY SQUIRRELS.

But it is always parlor work encouraging the multiplication of an exotic creature, no matter how seemingly harmless, in a new habitat. For my part I confess to some curiosity as to what the effect of the introduction of the American grey squirrel into London is going to be on the smaller birds.



Copyright. CHARLTON HOUSE: SIR WILLIAM LANGHORNE'S LEAD CISTERN. "C.L."

them dared to make any approach to driving the coot out of his insolently-chosen resting-place. They swam round and round in evident agitation, while the coot preened its feathers without paying any attention to them, cuddled down on the nest and, apparently, went to sleep. An hour later, when I last looked, it was still there, and the grebes were still swimming round and round making remarks.

A CONTRAST IN BLACK AND WHITE.

Byron speaks of the "bald-coot bully." Both on this piece of water and in other places in my experience coots and moorhens seem to live in perfect amity, and I have never seen the bald-pate do anything more treacherous than its usurpation of the grebes' nest, though coots quarrel among

It is not likely that the grey squirrel is exempt from the general liking of the squirrel tribe for rifling birds' nests. London is coming every year to be more and more of a bird sanctuary, almost every spring some new species being reported as building not merely in the outskirts of the great city, but in the central parks themselves. The grey squirrels in Regent's Park have made themselves extraordinarily at home; and I know one house near the park to which a squirrel comes daily for nuts which are put out for him, though to get there he has to cross two well-travelled streets and make his way, through the front gates and along the palings, between a row of semi-detached villas. He does it all as punctually and as unconcernedly as a cat accustomed to go to meet the cats'-meat man. It is pretty to see him, and the grey squirrel is a delightful person; but in Central Park in New York there is an almost total absence of singing birds, and it would be interesting to know how the London blackbirds and thrushes, tits and robins regard the new importation.

LITERATURE.

A BOOK OF THE WEEK.

LONDON is the most bewildering place in the world. It repulses and attracts at one and the same time. It is, in the words of Charlotte Brontë, "a Babylon of a place"; and it is also, in the phrase of our greatest woman poet, "the gathering-place of souls." No wonder that the language of metaphor has been exhausted in attempts to describe it. To Shelley it was

that great sea, whose ebb and flow
At once is deaf and loud, and on the shore
Vomits its wrecks, and still howls on for more,
Yet in its depths what treasures!

Others have found a personality for it, and have figured London as some witch or necromancer, the accents of whose low, sweet song are carried to the furthest limits of the globe, and exercise a compelling influence on all who listen to them. It was therefore a happy thought, this of publishing at the opening of the season a book called *London's Lure* (George Bell and Sons), in which are brought together some of the more eloquent passages about London from our poets and prose writers. In our opinion it is impossible to analyse and put into words the full charm of the metropolis. Like life it is made up of contradictions. As there could be no beauty unless there were ugliness, no pleasure were there no pain, and no merriment did sadness not exist, so the enumeration only of what is beautiful in London would not show its attractions. We must seek those in its very extremes. The sylvan charm of the green places that occur in it must be considered with the mean streets and the miles of desolate, uninteresting houses. Of those who have understood and loved London, perhaps the highest place ought to be given to the "gentle Elia," with whom it was an article of faith that

A mob of men is better than a flock of sheep, and a crowd of happy faces jostling into the playhouse at the hour of six is a more beautiful spectacle to man than the shepherd driving his "silly" sheep to fold.

This is the position of the absolute and uncompromising Londoner, the man who, far from ashamed of it, glories in the very name of Cockney. And like unto him in this love of London was Samuel Johnson, whose firm resolve was "never to exchange the exhilarating joys and splendid decorations of public life for the obscurity, insipidity and uniformity of remote situations." And Johnson had flashes of insight into the romance of London that one would scarcely have expected of him. He knew well how different it is to live in the country, where a man is isolated, and therefore known from every point of view. His good fortune and his reverses alike are public property, and it is impossible for him to conceal anything. In London, as Johnson learnt from experience, a man can put a good face on the most severe loss of income. If it is the town of greatest luxury, it is also that of the greatest cheapness, and its citizens are not in the habit of enquiring too closely where the Bohemian sleeps in whose daylight actions they take some delight. Nowhere in the world is merit more readily recognised for its own sake, just as nowhere else can neglect be more cruel. Those who have loved the open air must have been eloquent in its praise. It was he who sang of sorrow,

Barricaded evermore within the walls of cities

who also composed that lovely sonnet which ends with the lines:

Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;
And all that mighty heart is lying still!

So Wordsworth wrote of Dawn; but whenever a theme arises in regard to London, search will not be in vain for good matter about its antithesis, and the charm and mystery of night in it have been described in language as appealing as that used of daybreak. The late Sir John Robinson has a fine sentence about that brief space of time in which London can be said to be asleep: "When the rattle of

"ROBIN'S-EGG BLUE."

There seems less room for misgiving over the introduction of the American robin, at least two attempts to acclimatise which in England are now going on. With its bright chestnut breast (whence its name) and its dark head, the American robin is as handsome a bird as any of our native thrushes, and has fully as sweet a song as any. Over a large part of the United States it is regarded as the herald of spring, the first robin's song being as welcome as the first cuckoo's note is to us. It would be nice to see it hopping, hunting for worms, as its way is in America, in entire friendliness about our lawns, and we should also then understand what American writers mean when they speak of "robin's-egg blue." It is a pretty phrase for a pretty colour, absurd to our ears because our robin lays only a sandy-speckled egg; but that of the American robin is much like the egg of our song-thrush, without the black spots and of a softer shade of blue, something between the tint of the egg of the song-thrush and that of the hedge-sparrow. H. P. R.

wheels, the hum of voices, the shouts of revellers, are heard no longer." He goes on:

They die away by about three, when all is still, but in half-an-hour there are dropping shots of sound, and soon the heavy waggons on their way to Covent Garden come rumbling by, the advance guard of the waking millions.

Disraeli, too, touched on the charm of this space of time with his usual discernment:

Nothing is stirring except waggons of strawberries and asparagus, and no one visible except a policeman or a Member of Parliament returning from a late division, where they have settled some great question that need never have been asked.

Leaving the general for the particular, it is difficult to choose from the multitudinous points of interest. Mr. Barrie, in a notable book, has shown how imagination can people Kensington Gardens with the "little folk," and there is no brook purling in the distant counties that is clothed with so many human associations as the Serpentine. As William Black very finely said:

The Serpentine is very small and insignificant, doubtless; but so is a sea-shell, and the sea-shell, if you are alone, and if you listen closely, will tell you stories of the sea.

Hyde Park, Piccadilly and Mayfair defy the power of words to unfold their charm. How many of us share the feeling of Frederick Locker-Lampson:

Piccadilly!—shops, palaces, bustle and breeze,
The whirling of wheels, and the murmur of trees,
By daylight, or nightlight, noisy, or stilly,
Whatever my mood is—I love Piccadilly.

Mr. Andrew Lang in his happiest prose has tried to unravel the same mystery:

The next best aspect, or perhaps the best aspect, of Piccadilly is in the evening in mid-October, when the lingering light flushes the houses, the sunset struggling through the opals of the London smoke, red and azures blending in the distance, while all down through "the gradual dusky veil" of evening the serpentine lines of lamps begin to burn. London, when there is not a fog, has sunsets of peculiar beauty, thanks perhaps to the smoky air; whatever the reason they are very soft, rich and strange. Many a time, walking eastward, through the early dusk in Piccadilly, I have turned back, and stood watching these beautiful effects, which Mr. Marshall, by the bye, often renders admirably in water-colour.

The inevitable contrast is to be found in the stateliness of Westminster and St. Paul's. We feel that the finest conception of St. Paul's is at the back, so to speak, of a poem in which it is not described, and only one of all our poets could have written it:

'Twas on a holy Thursday, their innocent faces clean,
The children walking to and fro, in red, and blue, and green;
Gray-headed beadles walked before, with wands as white as snow,
Till into the high dome of Paul's they like Thames waters flow.

Another turn of the kaleidoscope shows us the Strand, Covent Garden and the Inns of Court, which have a different interest and a different poetry. It is like closing Milton to read Chaucer, for the neighbourhood is one in which the air is thronged with memories of men of the past and "dear dead women, with such hair too." And if we pass along to the City, there is further proof of the infinite variety of London. Listen to a countryman like George Borrow speaking of Cheapside:

"O Cheapside! Cheapside!" said I, as I advanced up that mighty thoroughfare, "truly thou art a wonderful place for hurry, noise, and riches! Men talk of the bazaars of the East—I have never seen them—but I daresay that, compared with thee, they are poor places, silent places, abounding with empty boxes, O thou pride of London's east!—mighty mart of old renown!—for thou art not a place of yesterday:—long before the Roses red and white battled in fair England, thou didst exist—a place of throng and bustle—a place of gold and silver, perfumes and fine linen."

The river provides a very different interest and attraction. The very names of the Embankment, Blackfriars Bridge, London Bridge, bring up suggestions of misery and tragedy. And thus the steps of the thoughtful dreamer, as he wanders over the great town area, bring him as it were from one strange city to another, and he requires to be at a distance and detached to feel that they are all parts of one great whole.

In addition to its variety London is ever changing. When Tom Hood wrote of "shining Vauxhall," he had little idea what the place would be in the twentieth century; and even Horace and James Smith did not foresee the magnitude of Greater London when they wrote:

Saint George's Fields are fields no more,
The trowel supersedes the plough;
Huge inundated swamps of yore,
Are changed to civic villas now.

Many streets familiar to our forefathers have of late years been rebuilt, and all the talking that once sounded so modern about hansom cabs and omnibuses is in the way of becoming matter for the antiquarian to ponder over. Electricity has already effected an extraordinary alteration in the traffic, and it promises to effect still more in future. Yet the new, at least, has the effect of

are composed of Italian scrollwork, and where we should expect Gothic finials rising from the parapets we find dolphins playing round semi-circular panels of classic type. Whether all this foreign ornament in a foreign material was made abroad and imported or produced by Italians in England is uncertain. Mr. Gotch even inclines to the view that as the English character is never quite lost, it was more likely to be the work of Englishmen with Italian proclivities than of Italians acting under English orders. The same material is found at Sutton Place. Yet, though Sir Richard Weston, its builder, was also closely connected with the Court, its window tracery shows no sign of the Italian influence which is reserved for the ornamental panels of the parapet; and even there it is associated with a Gothic quatre-foil. Warwickshire seems to have been beyond the limits of the influence of Henry VIII.'s Italians, and Compton Winyates is wholly English, although we owe so much of it to Sir William Compton. Mr. Stratton tells us that, "When it is remembered that it was built about the same time as Layer Marney Hall and Sutton Place by a man distinguished at Court and one who had travelled and been in contact with the progressive movements of the age, it is surprising that there should be practically no trace of foreign influence even in the ornament which is lavished upon it. Attempt at symmetry there is none, and irregularity of plan and superstructure alike underlies every part." Built of brick with stone dressings and roofed with stone tiles, it stands out as one of the best preserved and most picturesquely beautiful examples of its time which we still possess, and we should certainly "pray for the soul" of John Berrill the steward, who kept it standing and repaired when his master, the



S. Saunders.

FLOODED MEADOWS.

Copyright.

making the old more interesting, and all that is most modern to-day will probably be regarded as old-fashioned by the children of this generation, or at least by their children's children.

SIXTEENTH CENTURY HOMES.

The Domestic Architecture of England During the Tudor Period.
by Thomas Garner and Arthur Stratton. Part II. (Batsford.)

THE second of the three parts into which Mr. Batsford is dividing this book is now published and the closing part is promised during the course of the year. The present instalment is rich in specimens of that brick architecture which distinguished fifteenth century buildings in the Eastern Counties and then spread South and West, setting Renaissance detail on to the Gothic mass as that foreign style gradually percolated into England. The two best surviving examples of this partnership of the two modes carried out wholly in baked earth are Layer Marney in Essex and Sutton in Surrey, and both are included in this section. Sir Henry Marney was early connected with the Court of Henry VIII., whose Captain of the Guard he was before he became Keeper of the Privy Seal and a Knight of the Garter. He therefore would come across such Italian designers and artists as Torrigiano, da Rovezzano and da Majano, whom the King and his Cardinal Minister were employing. Hence the use of terra-cotta for the dress-work of his brick house and the strongly Italian character of the ornament of the great Gothic gate-tower, which is the chief surviving portion. The windows over the archway appear at first to have trefoil-headed lights, but a close inspection shows that these

eighth Earl, ruined himself and thought it would be cheaper to pull it down. The grand gatehouses of Oxburgh, Huddleigh and Little Leighs Priory are also given as examples of late Gothic brick architecture, while Kentwell Hall, though essentially dating from the time of Elizabeth, also has a strong flavour of her father's age. An example of brickwork is also given us from that essentially stone-using county, Northamptonshire. The ruined Fawsley Dower House, probably built by Sir Edmund Knightley in Henry VIII.'s time, is for the most part composed of brick, with diapers in the walling, and it possesses the only examples of elaborately-cut brick chimney-stacks in the county. Most of Sir Edmund's work, however, was in stone, for to him is attributed the great hall of the manor house with its splendid and original oriel. The wreckage wrought a hundred years ago by Blore and the large additions more recently made have largely overwhelmed the original Tudor house, and this is most regrettable, as, to quote Mr. Stratton, "the parts that have escaped mutilation are remarkable for their reticence of form and purity of detail." Moving south, we find the stone houses of Dorsetshire well represented. Despite the loss of its gatehouse and of much of its outbuildings, Athelhampton is still a gem, and the illustration of its south-west front does it justice. From Mapperton we have details of the stone finials. They are absolutely of the first class. On the top of a spiral column sits an heraldic animal holding a shield. From them we are able to realise somewhat the appearance of Henry VIII.'s garden at Hampton Court, which was so thickly sprinkled with "Kynges and Quenys Beestes" sitting on such columnar posts. Parnham, lying close to Mapperton, is another Dorsetshire house retaining distinctly Gothic features. Its porch appears on the

same plate as that of Chantmarle, which was built by an owner of Parnham after the Renaissance style had obtained full hold on English builders. There seems, however, a lingering of older traditions about its window light heads which we do not expect to find in a house which was not built until the seventeenth century had opened. Winterbourne Anderson, the last of this Dorset group, has a more pronounced Jacobean feeling. Of half-timber structures, a full plate does justice to the entrance elevation of Little Moreton Hall, springing out of its moat and rising high to accommodate the well-known gallery in its roof. Moreton is certainly the most fascinating of the Cheshire timber houses, and the way in which the whole—except the rooms needed by the farmer—is kept untouched except for necessary repair, and so constantly open to the public, calls for the highest praise. More elaborate, as an example of late mediæval woodwork, is Ford's Hospital at Coventry. Mr. Stratton points out that "the resources of the craftsmen engaged were such that the design of the tracery varies in every window; as it is so ornate and so small in scale, the entire head above the springing is cut out of one piece, the glass being carried up continuously behind it and not let into the tracery itself, as is customary in heavier work. But perhaps the richest detail is lavished upon the barge-boards of the gables, some of the running floral patterns being exceptionally fine." Yet even finer are the barge-boards at Rudhall in Herefordshire. We have no better example of fifteenth century timber-work than in the gable ends here, and the work is original and unrestored. The builder was William Rudhall, a Lancastrian partisan in the service of Prince Edward, the son of Henry VI., whose personal badge of three ostrich feathers enclosed in a garter, as also the rose and portcullis badges of his house, are carved on the beams. This is a remnant of pre-Tudor architecture; but we may well welcome it within the pages of this work, to the appearance of whose third and concluding section we shall look forward with pleasure.

T.

BOOKS TO ORDER FROM THE LIBRARY.

A Sense of Humour, by Beryl Faber and Cosmo Hamilton. (Hutchinson.)
 An Impending Sword, by Horace Annesley Vachell. (Murray.)
 The Biography of a Silver Fox, by Ernest Seton Thompson. (Constable.)
 Priscilla of the Good Intent, by Halliwell Sutcliffe. (Smith, Elder.)
 Set in Silver, by C. N. and A. M. Williamson. (Methuen.)
 Enchanters of Men, by Ethel Colburn Mayne. (Methuen.)
 Personæ, by Ezra Pound. (Elkin Mathews.)
 Other Things than Love, by Handasyde. (Hutchinson.)

[“NOVELS OF THE WEEK” ARE REVIEWED ON PAGE LXVI.]

THE BEST IN THE MAGAZINES.

The Fortnightly Review.

PROBABLY the literary reader will turn to the article by Georgette Leblanc-Maeterlinck in the *Fortnightly* called “In Madame Bovary's Country.” Those who know the writer have long been aware that she possesses all the qualities necessary for the task of composition, but it seemed for a long time as though she were unable to do justice to herself on paper. This beautiful essay is a welcome proof that she has surmounted the difficulty. It is a fresh and delightful contribution. In a different way equally high praise may be bestowed on Mr. E. A. Baughan's criticism on “John Galsworthy as Dramatist.” It is full of understanding and sympathy, and must help greatly towards a wider appreciation of the most studious and devoted playwright of our day. There are many other general articles in an excellent number. Mr. McCarthy on Carlyle, Mr. T. H. S. Escott on the Parochial System and Mr. E. H. D. Sewell on Rugby Football, appeal each to a particular class. Mr. Stead holds forth about the Exploration of The Other World with the dogmatism characteristic of him.

The National Review.

Mr. L. J. Maxse lives splendidly up to his vocation this month. He has chosen as his business in life to watch the proceedings of the German Emperor and the German people. This month we have the “Episodes” almost entirely taken up with the one subject with which the editor is pre-occupied, and the first article in the paper is called “After the Storm—Reflections on the Downfall of the British Empire.” We are told that “This article is a textual reproduction of a popular German pamphlet (‘Nach dem Sturm’)—one of the innumerable efforts to inflame the German people against Great Britain—which helps to explain the practical unanimity of the German Reichstag in endorsing the Imperial Naval Programme as well as the extraordinary popular enthusiasm in Germany for airships. In form it purports to be a lecture delivered at the International University of Alexandria in 1911, by Arabi Pasha.” Next comes “A Plea for a Comprehensive Policy of National Defence,” by Mr. H. W. Wilson. Then we have “Sidelights on German Preparations for War,” and finally the “German Army,” and if “The Case for a Canadian Navy” be thrown in, it will be seen how bellicose is the publication. The rest of the space is filled up by disquisitions on cheap milk, the Australian cricketers and American affairs.

The Nineteenth Century.

In the *Nineteenth Century*, too, the German peril bulks very largely. Certainly the most interesting article on the subject that it contains is the one on the two-Power standard in airships, by Captain T. G. Tulloch. Unlike so many “stir-up” articles, its ardour is held in check by a sense of humour, which in no way detracts from the serious treatment of the subject. The drift of his contention will be gleaned from the following passage: “There is no getting away from the fact that the whole population of Germany, realising that the victory in the game of *Dreadnought* building must lie with the nation possessing the longest purse, sees in the airship a way of becoming supreme at less expense and very soon; and the frenzied haste to subscribe is stimulated by the knowledge that it will be many years before we or others can attain the experience they already possess. They very rightly recognise, what is apparently not generally recognised in this country, especially when anything new is in question, that money will not buy experience,” but this

gives very little idea of the knowledge and good sense with which the argument is continued. The first article in the number is entitled “Six German Opinions on the Naval Situation.” It deals with the effect produced in Germany by Sir Edward Grey's proposal to call a halt in the race of naval armaments. Mr. Lewis Melville contributes an unpublished correspondence called “William Beckford's Adventure in Diplomacy.” William Beckford is best known as the author of “Vathek,” but the discovery made here is that he “actually endeavoured, by the unaided efforts of himself and his agents, to arrange a basis for a treaty of peace between France and England in the year 1797.” The article might be described in Stevenson's well-known phrase as a “foot-note to history.”

The English Review.

In this Mr. W. H. Hudson contributes a charming paper called “Goldfinches at Ryde Intrinsica.” He seems to have been attracted by the names of the two villages Yetminster and Ryde Intrinsica, and paid them a visit on his way from Yeovil to Dorchester. In the course of his disquisition he says, “The East-ender is ‘devoted’ to his chaffinch, but for the generality the first favourite is undoubtedly the goldfinch, and if few are seen in cages compared with larks and linnets it is because they are much rarer and cost more. Our ‘devotion’ to it, as we have seen, nearly caused its extermination in Britain, and we now import large numbers from Spain to supply the demand. One doubts that the bird will stand this drain very long, as the Spanish are just as fond of it (in a cage) as we are.” In point of fact, however, the goldfinch lives a very happy life within easy range of Greater London, nesting freely in the gardens of many of those who go back and forward to the City every day. The note on Algernon Charles Swinburne is disappointing. It concludes with the statement that “of the Victorian poets he was the most generous in the outpourings of his heart, the most nobly unthinking, the bravest, the most flamelike.” This might be described as “a phrase of little meaning, though the words are strong.”

The Strand.

This magazine opens with an excellent story by Mr. Morley Roberts, with whom in his recent affliction and severe illness much sympathy must be felt. There are a great number of those entertaining light articles for which the magazine is famous. Mr. Percy Burton tells us “How a Variety Theatre is Run”; Mr. Arthur Morrison has a delightful article on “Japanese Sand Pictures”; a symposium of missionaries describe the “Mind of the Savage,” and from the light and witty pen of Mr. John N. Raphael there is a paper on “The Actresses of Paris.” The number is one of the best we have seen for a long time.

THE FLY-BOX.

WHEN a man starts his fishing career he is wont—small blame to him—to be bewildered by the number of flies and the infinite variety of patterns. “Give me the names of a good half-dozen to begin with,” he implores his fishing mentor, and if he is going to fish in his mentor's neighbourhood his road will be made easy for him. But if his friend should be a Hampshire man, and he himself proposes to fish—shall we say—in Yorkshire, the question cannot be readily answered. In the Northern county the flies that preponderate may not be those of Itchen and Test. And—and this is the point to be driven home—even supposing the flies happen to be the same, so that Olives, Red Spinner, etc., kill equally well in both localities, yet the dressing of them is so different as practically to render useless patterns brought from the one to the other. Even in two adjacent counties, such as Dorsetshire and Hampshire, this difference in dressing may be noticed. In the former the trout seem to prefer a more lightly dressed fly than the approved Winchester patterns. Again, on the principal Dorsetshire waters the Olives that do best in several fishermen's hands are those that have least onion or other dye about them, again in contrast to those used on the Itchen. In Derbyshire the same flies must have still less dressing, one good fisherman using scarcely gin, of silk and nothing else in the construction of his bodies. He uses hooks smaller than any listed sizes, and the fish dread his autumn holiday.

When the limestone and chalk districts are left behind, the change, both in fly and pattern, is of course still greater. “Spiders,” i.e., hackled flies, are in greater demand, and fancy flies, not copied from any natural insect, are freely used, Jay and Teal, white moth with a strip of scarlet in each wing, and the Heckam Peckham being a very successful team on Nithsdale burns. Nor is it possible to ignore these “fancy” flies—those not wittingly copied from the natural insect, on Southern chalk streams. Empiricism dies hard in the natural man, and when he finds a Pink Wickham, a Tup's Indispensable, or a Sarcelle kill on many a day after he has exhausted his fly-box and patience in trying to copy the fly on the water, he may be forgiven for being ever open to experimenting with patterns like—as far as he can see—nothing to be found in Nature, even to the extent of binding gold wire round some of Mr. Halford's exquisite copies of olive duns.

But the ways of trout are hard to explain. At one time it was the fashion at dusk to put on the big Coachman under the impression that the fish could see it better and would take it for a white moth. But the fish appear to see the tiniest quill gnat just as well as the Coachman. Again, a big rough sedge is often used successfully in the bright sunlight. Strange as it may sound, it is well worth while at any time in the day when fish have

been coming shyly at the ooo patterns to put on a big fly, No. 1, or No. 2, with a good fat body, and float it over them. The chalk-stream trout is a lazy beast after June, disinclined to move unless good and sufficient inducement is offered him, and the bigger mouthful has at times the desired effect. An old-fashioned fly, the Red Palmer, fished wet can be very deadly even among well-educated fish. In Dorsetshire the fish seem to prefer it with a sandy brown—not Furnace—hackle. On streams where the May-fly is scarce fish are apt to be scared by that fly dressed on anything bigger than a No. 2.

LAW AND THE LAND.

LANDOWNERS who either have laid out, or contemplate laying out, part of their property as a building estate, and purchasers from them, and, indeed, all persons who regard with dislike the desecration of rural neighbourhoods by the erection of advertising hoardings, will be interested in a case which has just been decided by the Court of Appeal. Land had been offered for sale in lots as a residential building estate, subject to certain restrictive conditions intended for the general benefit of the estate and the various purchasers. The conveyance to the individual purchaser contained covenants by him to fence off his lot from the road by a dwarf wall with iron palisading, and that no building for the carrying on of any offensive trade or calling should be erected on the land purchased by him. Many years after the sale, one of the purchasers allowed a bill-posting company to erect a permanent hoarding along the boundary of his plot of land and to cover it with advertisements. The owner of an adjoining lot contended that this constituted a breach of the restrictive covenant, and sued for a mandatory injunction to compel the defendants to pull down the hoarding. This has been granted, both Mr. Justice Neville and the Court of Appeal being of opinion that the hoarding was a fence, and so not of the required character, and

also a building which was, under the circumstances, used for the carrying on of an offensive trade or calling. It was a building, they said, upon which the trade or calling of bill-posting was carried on; that in connection with property planned and arranged and intended for the erection of residences of a substantial character such a trade or calling was offensive to the eye; and that the plaintiff and the other residents on the estate were justified in regarding such a hoarding as a legitimate ground of offence to them as owners of adjoining plots. So the hoarding must come down, which is something to be thankful for.

It is a well-known rule of law that a legatee, whether general or specific, and whether of real or personal property, must obtain the executor's assent to the legacy before his title as legatee can be complete and perfect, and until such assent has been given he has no authority to take possession of the article or property that has been left to him. As, speaking generally, an executor has a year from the testator's death in which to get in the estate, the point must constantly have arisen in practice, in the case of a specific legacy, on whom falls the expense of preserving and maintaining the subject matter of the legacy between the date of the testator's death and the date on which the legatee receives possession of the legacy; must it be borne by the specific legatee or ought it to be paid out of the residuary estate? Suppose a man leaves his horse to a friend, who does not get the animal until six months have elapsed, who must pay for the keep and care of the animal during the intervening period? It is, indeed, astonishing that up to a few weeks ago there had been no reported decision settling this point. Still, there is no great difficulty about it, and in a case where a testator, who died in 1907, left to his wife his horses, carriages, motor-cars and yacht, and the executors had expended money on upkeep of these before they assented to the legacies and handed the articles over to the wife, it was held that the wife must be charged with such expenditure to the exoneration of the residuary estate. The decision was based on the principle that as a legatee is entitled to any benefit accruing from the legacy before assent is given, she must bear any loss or expense incurred in connection with the legacy.

ON THE GREEN.

EDITED BY HORACE HUTCHINSON.

FINAL STAGE OF THE BIG FOURSOME.

IT would not be profitable to treat at great length of the final stage of the big professional foursome. In the first place, it is an old story, and in the second place, it is the story that the first stage, at Bursill, accurately foretold. The play at Walton Heath did not compensate for the lack of interest in the match, and, on the whole, the rather tame conclusion of a win for Braid and Taylor by eight up and seven to play was just about what the relative performances of the two pairs seemed to warrant. The course at Walton Heath was in fine order, much benefited by the liberal showers which it has received lately. The new bunkers are both well placed and well planned, and some of the old ones, which used to be of such bottomless depth that they reduced all those who got into them to the like miserable necessity of playing out sideways with the loss of a shot, seem to have worn themselves shallower in their pits and less high and steep in their cliffs, so that they now are more reminiscent of the natural sand bunker of the seaside links, and give the better sand player a chance to show his skill and profit by it. Moreover, the "amenities," such as the ornamental gardens around the club-house and the Dornay house, are coming on apace, so that all is for the best on this admirable inland course. It is a course that will always be better in the green than in the dry.

THE VETERANS STILL THE BEST.

As someone said, when the match was done, "I expect they'll leave these old men in peace now for a bit." "These old men" were Braid and Taylor. All things are relative. The implication was that the presumption of young men in challenging the world had received a set-back for the time, and that the admission would have to be made that the men who have led so long are the leaders still. I do not think that anyone can have watched this match with care without coming to a definite conclusion why it is that the younger pair were beaten. They can drive about as straight and far and steadily as the others, and they can putt as well, but they are not the men of their hands that the others are. They have not the same faculty of holding the ball up to the wind off an iron club in approaching the hole—a feat that is done by some rather delicate and at the same time very forcible work with the hands and wrists. This is where they fail, comparatively. It is very important, and it makes all the difference.

A WINDY SCHOOL GIVES THE BEST EDUCATION.

Personally, I have much belief in training a golfer where the great gales blow; he will there be obliged to learn this control of the ball, if he is to be first-rate. You will find that all the best have had their training in these wind-swept places, beside the sea, and Duncan and Mayo have not been taught to fight the gales in quite such a windy school. No doubt Duncan has had more of it than Mayo, but he left Aberdeenshire for inland courses at a very early age. He did not get the prolonged salting by the sea-breezes of Braid, Taylor, Vardon, Herd, Massy and the rest.

MR. JOHN BALL AT HOYLAKE.

One of the windiest schools of golf, and one of the most difficult, because of its narrowness, is that of Hoylake, and it has produced a scholar in Mr. John Ball, who takes first prize in the craft of dodging a wind and using a wind to his advantage. At the recent meeting there they actually had a new name on the winning record (which does not often happen on that links) on the first day, Mr. J. P. Carr taking first medal with 81, and Mr. Hilton and Mr. Weaver tying for the second at two strokes more. The

weather was boisterous; but it was more boisterous still on the second day, when Mr. Ball went round in a score of 80. Again Mr. Hilton was equal second, this time with Mr. Graham, but their score was four strokes worse than Mr. Ball's. I believe that Mr. Ball is playing quite distinctly better now than he has played for a good many years. That is saying a great deal; and it is a queer thing to say of a man of his age, and of one who has played the game he has for so long.

BACK TO THE SEA.

The Bar beat the Stock Exchange for the second year in succession last Saturday, and were thoroughly pleased with themselves for doing so; but it must be admitted that this year the match fell rather from its high estate. In the first place, the Stock Exchange side was but a ghost of its proper self; only the first three would even figure in a really representative side. Secondly, the change from a seaside to an inland venue was not at all a success. For the last five years the match has been played at Sandwich, but on this occasion some members of the Bar side were so wedded to their own firesides or their own briefs, as to declare that they could not undertake so long a journey. The match, therefore, came inland, and instantly, from being a match of some little interest and importance, and proving a very pleasant week-end, it dropped to the level of the ordinary suburban match. "Back to the sea" was the cry from the members of both sides at the end of the day, and it is to be hoped that next year will see the match on a seaside course again. Such a wish implies no disrespect to Bramshot, which is a pleasant enough spot, but the sea is the real thing, and this match must not be allowed to fail for want of it.

BARRISTERS AND STOCKBROKERS.

As far as the actual play was concerned, there was nothing particularly exciting. The Bar were up in seven out of the nine matches at lunch, but that did not give them any particular feeling of security, because last year eight out of the nine of them were up at lunch, and yet they only squeezed home the barest possible winners, mainly through a brilliant spurt in the last nine holes by Mr. Evan Charteris. However, on Saturday the Bar took their lead and their lunch with greater equanimity and always seemed to be winning comfortably. Mr. Beveridge always had the measure of Mr. Horace Castle, who was hitting some woefully crooked shots, while Mr. Arnold Read, although getting well enough into the vicinity of the hole, could not quite get into it. Incidentally, it may be mentioned that Mr. Read, by losing his match, spoiled a rather remarkable record, in that till Saturday he had never before been defeated in a single in a team match. He kindly refrained from imparting this terrifying intelligence to his opponent till after the match was over, or the result might have been different. Mr. Wyatt won, as he generally does, and is an eminently sound and reliable player; he was playing very well the other day for Sunningdale against Woking. Mr. Tindal Atkinson and Mr. J. D. Read had a very hard match, and holed a lot of long putts—no mean achievement; and Mr. Hoare played a very fine home-coming nine in the morning, which gave him a commanding lead. It was sad not to see Mr. Herman de Zoete playing for the Stock Exchange; if only to lure him back into playing, there must be a change of venue next year.

THE CRICKETERS' INTER-COUNTY TOURNAMENT.

There has been such a deal that required comment in recent golf that the tournament of the County Cricketers has been a little overlooked. It is now in the interesting final stage; the more interesting because of the quality

of the players, namely, Mr. W. H. Fowler and Mr. Trask of Somerset, on the one side, and, on the other, Mr. A. S. Johnston and Mr. Arnold Read for Essex. Perhaps Mr. Trask is least known of the four as a golfer, but he is a very steady and deliberate player and an admirable partner in a foursome to a player of Mr. Fowler's power. Mr. Fowler does not hit the golf ball, relatively speaking, as far as he used to hit the cricket ball (so high an authority as Dr. W. G. Grace has said that he considered Mr. Fowler could hit a cricket ball as far as any man), but he hits it quite far enough when in form. Mr. A. S. Johnston is really the most consistent player, perhaps, of all the four. Mr. Read is usually to be relied on, and at times is brilliant. The Somersetshire couple are perhaps capable of the better golf, but the Essex pair more likely to produce their best when it is wanted.

BECKENHAM AND MR. TRAVERS.

It is hoped and rumoured that Mr. Travers will have worked his way southwards by May 15th for a short while and will play at the open meeting at Beckenham on that date. It would naturally be very interesting if he did, and London golfers would like to see the man who is at present only a terrifying and mysterious name. The American champion has not apparently been doing particularly well as yet, but he may not be acclimatised; possibly he might find the Beckenham course more like those he is accustomed to than are our seaside links. It is the typical, thoroughly well-kept inland course which is not alarmingly difficult for the man who can hit fairly far and fairly straight, but those two virtues are essential.

MR. S. J. CHESTERTON.

Mr. Chesterton and his partner, Mr. Worthington, who have just won the London Foursomes for the Mid-Surrey Club, made a very formidable pair, and overthrew with tolerable ease all the opposition—some of it very strong—that came in their way. In single-handed encounters, Mr. Chesterton won the amateur championship of France in 1907 and came very near the Irish championship in the same year. In that tournament he defeated Mr. John Ball, after a fierce match in which he fairly wore that great man down, after having been at one time several holes to the bad. Mr. Chesterton has improved so much in the last few years that he may very likely have still not quite reached the limit of his powers.

MUIRFIELD AND ITS BUNKERS.

THE spirit of bunker-making is abroad in the land, and the links of East Lothian (which has been called the Holy Land of Golf) have not escaped its influence; whether baneful or benign is another question, depending apparently upon the age of the golfer. This year will see two important events decided in East Lothian, viz., the great £300 professional tournament on the municipal course at North Berwick in July and the amateur championship at Muirfield in May; and those in authority at both these courses are determined that the reproach of being too easy shall not be hurled at either. This determination seems infectious, for new bunkers have been made on the old courses at North Berwick and Gullane. In view of the great tournament alluded to (to which, by the by, the competitors will be invited, the number being limited to sixty), the Town Council specially engaged James Braid to come and advise them as to the proper bunkering of their course; and so thoroughly was the champion imbued by the spirit above mentioned that he advised the making of no fewer than eighty-three bunkers. I have no doubt that such of the Town Council as are golfers have secret and malicious hopes that when the tournament day arrives Braid will visit some of them. Eighty-three does seem a lot! But more interest will be taken by the majority of golfers in the changes and new bunkers at Muirfield, most of which—at least, so far as the bunkers are concerned—have been effected under the guiding hand of Mr. Robert Maxwell. Those who have not seen Muirfield since the additional bit of ground at the north-east corner was taken in and the wall taken back some 400yds. and fairly well hidden, will be surprised at the change in the general appearance of the whole scenery of the course. The extent of golfing ground seems to have been mysteriously doubled, the cramped look has gone, while the hill which has to be carried from the eighth tee, blind though it be, gives a variety to the otherwise flat holes.

For the benefit of those who may not have heard the actual particulars of the changes, it should be explained that the removal

of the wall has enabled the putting green of the eighth hole to be moved back some 20yds. slightly to the right, a beautiful natural bit of turf having been discovered; indeed, the green is one of the best, being fast and very true, though full of the natural variations which make Muirfield putting greens so difficult. The ninth hole is entirely new. As has been said, the drive is over a hill, the carry being about 80yds. to 100yds. and the length of the hole about 320yds. The green is a difficult one and the approach narrow, with made bunkers on either side. To these we will revert later. The tenth is the greatest improvement of all. It is now, from the back tee, a really good and difficult two-shot hole on a calm day, instead of, as the old tenth was, a hybrid of the worst description. At present a good straight drive should reach the old ninth green, and thence a full shot over the bunker, which had to be carried from the old tenth tee, will get home, for the green has been brought forward from under the wall; this enables the tee to the eleventh to be brought back, so that there need be no playing short for fear of reaching the bunker off the tee, even with a following wind. The eleventh is now the longest hole in the course. These are all the structural alterations, though it should be said that a

change in the sixteenth is under consideration. As to the bunkers, so far twenty-seven have been added, and it may be that very shortly this number will be increased. Beginning at the first hole, a new one has been placed beyond, in *échelon* with the bunker which catches a sliced tee shot, to trap a high ball which carries the first. It should be said here that the first green has greatly improved of late, though it is very "tricky." There are no new hazards on the way to the second, the rough being rightly considered quite sufficient. Three, however, have been devised to make the third hole more interesting, and the approach, which was never too easy, now needs considerable accuracy. There is a bunker to the left of the course, where the rough had grown bare, to trap a pulled tee shot, another 30yds. short of the green near the wall and a third just off the green to the right for a sliced approach. One bunker has been made trenching on the green of the fourth to the left. Going to the fifth, the Guarding Cross bunker has been opened up, so that it is now worth while trying to get home in two on a calm day. A bunker has been made halfway to the hole on the left of the course and a bunker on the left of the green. New bunkers have been made to the right and left of the sixth, or Windmill Hole. The seventh (the Pond) is left alone; but the approach to the eighth is made very narrow by bunkers on each side, making it somewhat of the bottle-neck type. There is also a new bunker on the course to

the left to catch a pulled tee shot. Bunkers bestrew the way to the tenth, a small one to the left, just short of the green, being especially happy. The approach is rendered the more difficult by a bumpy kind of "hog's back" in front of the green, which it is proposed to remove in course of time. The drive to the tenth is over a tract of bents (fatal to a topped ball) between bunkers, but these are wide set and only trap a crooked shot. The approach, however, must be straight and not too strong, as there are pits on each side of the green just beyond it. Bar the lengthening of the tee shot at the eleventh, there is no change in the next three holes; but the short hole is now somewhat of a terror, and one bunker just beyond the green to the left is sure to come in for a good deal of bad language. There are, in addition to this one, bunkers at right-hand corners of the green, so that absolute straightness is necessary. There are no more new hazards till the seventeenth, where one has been made to the right which will be the grave of many a sliced approach. To the last hole two have been made on the course just over the ditch, in order to make a man who plays short with his second think a bit where he is going to. The general effect of these bunkers is to make the course very much more interesting, and it should satisfy the most exacting critic, though the rough is a most unpleasant hazard and, like the poor, it is always with us at Muirfield.

F. KINLOCH.



MR. S. J. CHESTERTON.

CORRESPONDENCE.

HOW TO COOK VEGETABLES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Your readers may perhaps be interested in the following Italian method of cooking potatoes *alla Parmigiana*: Bake six or seven potatoes and cut them in slices. Then place them in a baking-dish, sprinkling each layer with grated Parmesan cheese. Pour over them 4oz. of melted butter and place the dish in a slow oven until the potatoes are thoroughly warmed through. Serve with fried sage. I can also recommend the manner in which the Neapolitans cook this useful vegetable. Put in a frying-pan 3oz. of suet and 3oz. of butter, in which, when dissolved, fry a chopped onion and a small bunch of herbs. Add seven or eight potatoes, parboiled and cut in thick slices. Fry them for seven or eight minutes, turning the slices; sprinkle them with salt and pour over them about a pint of stock with a little tomato conserve. Serve with grated Parmesan cheese sprinkled on the top.—GRACE V. CHRISTMAS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In answer to "Ignoramus" in your issue of April 24th, I send a recipe for making spinach a delicious vegetable: Cut 1lb. of spinach in coarse shreds and boil till tender; strain and put in a stewpan with a quarter of a pint of cream. When it boils stir in the yolks of two eggs which have been well mixed with a tablespoonful of cream. Stir over the fire until thickened; but it must not boil.—RECTORY.

FRENCH AND ENGLISH HOUNDS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I am writing at some distance from the bulk of my books, but my authority is Jacques de Brézé, Mme. de Beaujeu's Grand Veneur, who wrote a poem "Des diéts du bon Chien Souillard." It is Baron Pichon who "believes the pointer's owner was Jean Robertet, Greffier de l'Ordre de Saint Michel and a friend of Jacques de Brézé." Noirmont is the authority for "Greffier," one of the puppies of the Souillard pointer litter, and the same writer speaks of thirteen puppies by "Greffier" as being in the kennel of Francis I. It is, however, to the above-named Jacques de Brézé that we owe our knowledge of Baulde. Writing of his mistress, de Brézé says:

"Elle se mest en la meglée
Tant que chevaux galoper purent
De parler aux Chiens ne cessoit
'Baulde, ma mie, la ira'
De si près elle le pressoit
Que je crois qu'elle le mangera."

Baulde was one of the Souillard strain, and de Brézé was enthusiastic about the old hound and his progeny and thus describes the last days of his favourite—(Souillard *log.*):

"Le mestre à qui je suis, que me guide si cher
Si me fait pain et chair pour mon vivre trancher
Coucher dan sa chambre près du feu et au lèment
Paille et belle litère accoutrés nettement."

Just such was the old age of our modern Souillard, Belvoir Gambler, whom I saw when quite old (I think he was about 16), enjoying his liberty at Belvoir Kennels.—X.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I have been assured by my friend M. P. A. Pichot, editor of the *Revue Britannique*, Paris, that the old lemon-pied Devon and Somerset staghounds were descended from Normandy hounds and not from the Vendée hounds. Some two or three years ago a pack of yellow-pied Normandy hounds were exhibited at the Paris Dog Show, and they exactly resembled the picture of



the old staghounds in Dr. Collins's book except that they were lighter in bone.—B. H. JONES.

THE WINCHMORE HILL WOODS

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—It was with something of a shock that I read in your issue of the 24th ult. the article on Winchmore Hill Woods. The way in which the woods around London are being ruthlessly destroyed is really appalling. There may, perhaps, have been a time when this could be done without arousing

widespread indignation, but that time is long since past. I cannot say more than was said in your admirable article, but I fully endorse what the writer said, especially with regard to the trees being a valuable asset instead of a useless encumbrance. If woodland must be built upon, anyone can see great possibilities in the woods for the development of a high-class estate consisting of detached residences, standing in their own grounds, in which it would be quite easy to enclose the best of the old trees. I feel certain they would quickly attract a desirable class of tenant who would be a great benefit to the local tradesmen and help to keep their old businesses together. The tenants would have the advantage of living in a country house in sight, practically, of the Bank of England. I am sure greater profits would reward the syndicate if they could only develop the estate on the intelligent lines set forth by your correspondent. But, perhaps, some public-spirited individual or the County Council will come forward and buy even a portion for the public, as has been done elsewhere before. If these two fail, why not start a public subscription list, as was done in the case of Crosby Hall (I believe), or would it take too long to get the amount, granting it were possible to buy? But if this can be done for an ancient building, why not for one of London's few remaining beauty spots and breathing spaces? I think that the various corporations would do well to try and acquire some of the old woods and established gardens instead of spending so much on transforming rubbish-heaps into unnatural and often unsuccessful gardens. I am positive that anyone who could do anything to save these splendid woods, would, by so doing, earn the gratitude of thousands.—A. LEWIN-WARNER.

RAIN-WATER TANKS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I am informed that there is an appliance on the market for automatically separating the discoloured rain-water which first runs off a roof when it commences to rain from the cleaner water which follows after the roof has been washed by the early portion of the shower. I should be greatly obliged if anyone could inform me where such an appliance can be purchased.—J. GOODMAN.

YEW HEDGES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Can any of your readers kindly give me directions as to the planting of a yew hedge in a large, old-fashioned walled garden in Scotland? The soil is clay. The gardener has put in the plants as close together as they can stand, and they look straggling and rusty brown. As I know a garden where the yew hedge, now twenty years old, is always rusty-looking and not a fresh green, I am anxious to know whether there is a difference in the plants and what kind is best for a cold climate; also what width the herbaceous border in front of the hedge should be. The gardener has only left 8½ ft., which will be further reduced when the plants in the hedge grow big.—INQUIRER.

"AT THE VERY TOP OF THEIR SPEED."

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I am sending you herewith a photograph which I venture to think would be of interest to many of the readers of COUNTRY LIFE. It is, as you will see, a singularly successful instantaneous photograph of race-horses at the very top of their speed. The man who took it is, I think, to be sincerely congratulated on the clearness and sharpness of the picture—a phase of the race for the Kingwood Plate, for which twenty-six horses ran, at the Epsom Spring Meeting, and the horses are just passing the famous Tattenham Corner. They are running on the straight five-furlong course, and, therefore, do not have to negotiate the turn, which lies to the right of the picture (facing the horses). The jockeys can be readily distinguished; and, unless I am in error, it is W. Griggs who is leading on Twinkle II.

Considering the pace at which the horses are going, the details of the picture are marvelously clear and precise. The "plates" on the horses' feet are clearly shown, as, indeed, is the smallest detail of their markings, and it is very interesting to note that when the forward impulse for the next stride is being given by the stroke of the hind legs, the fetlocks "give" until they are at right angles to the shank-bone of the hind leg. Marvellous indeed must be the natural mechanism which can support such a terrific and constantly repeated strain, and the study of such a picture as the one opposite this may well make one cease to wonder that "breakdowns" occur. I fear that I am trespassing both upon your good nature and upon your valuable space, but I would like to suggest that the picture I am sending you has set me thinking how interesting it would be could you secure four equally excellent photographs of the forthcoming race for the Derby. First—The Start. Second—Rounding the Bend at Tattenham Corner, and this should show the turn when nearly completed.

Third—At the Distance Post. Fourth—The Finish. After the race is over, more often than not there is considerable argument as to the position of the horses at the Corner; for here it is that the race is often lost and won, and here it is that such jockeys as was Fred Archer unhesitatingly risk, one may say, their lives in order to get the inside berth. Archer has been known to come round Tattenham Corner with one leg over the rails. A picture taken from the Distance Post itself should be of great interest, for here it is that the supreme moment approaches.—B.



A DILEMMA.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I should be very grateful if any of your readers could suggest some means of compassing the death of a deer which, after wandering in my woods with others for many months, has found its way into my garden and done serious mischief to trees and shrubs. Would it be possible to put down some poisoned roots which would kill the animal? One of my neighbours refused to shoot it with a rifle as being dangerous in this close country, and the Master of the staghounds refused to hunt the deer, owing to the danger of taking fallow deer. My keeper is on the watch, but can never get near enough to shoot it, and I wake every morning dreading to find my garden devastated. It is well fenced, but against the deer I am helpless.—HEDGERLEY.

[Deer are regarded in law as wild animals (*feræ naturæ*), and as such belong to no one, and the owner or occupier of land on which they are found may take them or kill them, unless he has parted with his sporting rights. He cannot make anyone responsible for the damage they do, except in the case of deer which have been tamed or reclaimed; if these escape from their enclosure, the person who reclaimed them may, speaking quite generally, be made liable for damage caused by their trespass on his neighbour's land. We never care to suggest the laying of poison in the open, owing to the possible danger to animals other than the objective and to man; and in this case we have more hesitation in view of the wording of Section 3 of the Poisoned Grain Prohibition Act, 1863, which makes it an offence to place poisoned grain, seed, or meal into, in, or upon, any ground or other exposed place or situation. Possibly, indeed probably, roots are not within the category of prohibited articles, but we are not quite certain and know of no authority upon the point. The further prohibition contained in the Game Act, 1831, against placing poison on any ground where game usually resort will not affect our correspondent, for an enclosed garden can hardly be said to be a place of resort, nor are deer game within the meaning of that Act. If a root is not a seed, there does not seem to be any legal impediment to our correspondent doing as he suggests; such an article as poisoned bread there could be no doubt about. But our impression is that a gun in capable hands is the best remedy, and more reliable and less dangerous than poison. Perhaps if a dog or two were turned loose in the woods, the deer would cease to find there an attractive resort; but there may be objections to this course, owing to young birds and the like.—ED.]

PLANTING DAFFODILS

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I was much interested in the letter on planting daffodils which appeared in your issue of May 1st, and I entirely agree with your correspondent that when planting them among grass the aim should be to make it appear as if they were set there by Nature. Although I, for one, should strongly object to narcissi, or any other flower, being planted for decorative effect either in formal groups or tiny patches when in an orchard, or among wild or informal surroundings, I can see no objection whatever to their being planted in such density as to cover the field or orchard, or, at any rate, a very large portion of it, provided this gives the idea that they are growing there naturally. I have lately seen a large Hertfordshire meadow covered with wild daffodils thus massed together by Nature and visible as a golden carpet half a mile away. I enclose a photograph of Phœasant's Eye narcissi, also massed together in a Hertfordshire orchard. These were planted some years ago and have now become as thoroughly naturalised as the wild daffodils referred to, or the bluebells in the woods near by, for which our county is so justly noted. This beautiful orchard scene, although far removed from the flowery valleys and hillsides of Switzerland, sufficiently stimulates the imagination to recall the open country between the



vineyards and pine woods above Vevey so happily described and illustrated in the article you published on April 3rd last. Here, in this orchard, as on the mountain-side, to quote the words of your article, the narcissi "reigns supreme," and, "almost to the exclusion of other vegetation, one may walk surrounded on every side by ground clothed in dazzling white as with freshly-fallen snow." The distant effect in the landscape of this mass of lovely blossom mingled with that of the orchard trees above is superb, and, further, the air for a considerable distance is filled with its exquisite fragrance.—H. H. WARNER.

CHERRY BLOSSOM.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Rarely have I seen the cherry blossom finer in this district (near Sevenoaks) than it is this year. I enclose herewith a photograph, taken a day or two ago, of a particularly fine old tree, a mass of glorious pearly whiteness, in a neighbouring orchard. Bu photography can by no means do justice to such a delicately wonderful vision as this.—M.

THE NIGHTINGALE'S SONG.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Can you or any of the many readers of your paper tell me if there is any known limit to the number of different tunes or "musical sentences" a nightingale sings? On Wednesday, April 28th, while listening to this strange bird, that sings alone all the night, I was struck by the few times the bird appeared to repeat itself. This put into my head an idea. The following night about 9.30 I sat down and noticed the time by my watch; then for every different "musical sentence" I marked a tick on a piece of paper. After five minutes I ceased, and on counting the ticks I was surprised to find no less than forty. Of course this number may be wrong, for it is extremely difficult, even with a little musical knowledge, to distinguish the difference between two sentences, which may vary but one note only. It is curious to note that this particular nightingale had been singing all the previous night and most of the day; and also that at the time of which I write it was raining heavily and had been doing so for some hours.—JOSEPH M. COURTNEY.

THE CUCKOO.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Seeing the beautiful illustrations in your issue of April 24th of a young cuckoo and its foster-mother, I think it may possibly interest your readers to hear how I brought up a cuckoo, as, I believe, it is considered a difficult thing to do. From our old garden wall bricks had from time to time dropped out, and every spring the holes were utilised by some small housewife. One of these holes, too high up to see into, was evidently the nursery of a water-wagtail, and one day, the garden steps being handy, I climbed up and looked in, and got a considerable shock on seeing, not four or five little baby wagtails, but an extraordinary object, more like a ferocious porcupine than a bird. I took him nest and all into the house, put him in a parrot's cage and placed it in our billiard-room, which was not being used at the time. Then began the trials of my family. "Cookmy" was quite the most fiendish-tempered, greedy little warrior I ever met. I fed him on worms and raw meat, and if there happened to be a bit of fat on his meat, he would give one violent shake of his head, and off would fly the fat on to wall, window, or even ceiling. My time was spent clambering about on chairs, cleaning up after Cookmy; but as the weather got hot, with all my care, I was sorry to find that everybody I invited to see my prodigy would quickly and silently leave the room with their handkerchiefs to their noses. When I found Cookmy developed no affection for me, but active dislike, I am afraid I teased him. I would place him on the billiard-table,

and then run round it, Cookmy pursuing me, hissing with fury. He never attempted to "cuckoo," but I believe the birds do not give the familiar note until they return to England the following spring. He grew very handsome, though his plumage was quite unlike that of the fully-grown bird, and I was fond of the irritable little person; but at the urgent request of my family I wrote and asked the Zoo authorities if they would kindly take him off my hands, and getting a prompt answer that they would be only too glad of him, my little wrathful torment was taken up to London, protesting and hissing to the last.—H. S. ORD.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I read with pleasure Mr. Walter Raymond's article on "The Wagtail's Foster-child." As a gamekeeper, I am in touch with the cuckoo a great deal, and I should like to inform your readers what I saw about ten years ago. I was round one morning near an old disused lime-kiln, and saw my usual wagtail's nest, as I had seen it for several years previous. On this occasion I looked into it, and it contained four eggs, which were evidently "sat upon," as they were quite warm. I moved away, and was about to enter a plantation close by when I saw what looked like a hawk but ultimately proved to be a cuckoo, near the nest on the ground. I watched for a few minutes, and saw the cuckoo go to the nest, and after an interval of about two minutes it flew away. I went back, and to my surprise and disgust found one egg in, which was the cuckoo's, and the other four lay just below the nest smashed; they had undoubtedly been thrown out then and there by the cuckoo, so I contend that that is what happens in nearly all cases. I wondered if the wagtail would forsake the nest; but she did not—she just hatched out the one egg and brought up her foster-child. I send you this as I think, perhaps, it may interest your readers who may have had a like experience.—INTERESTED.

THE RAVEN.

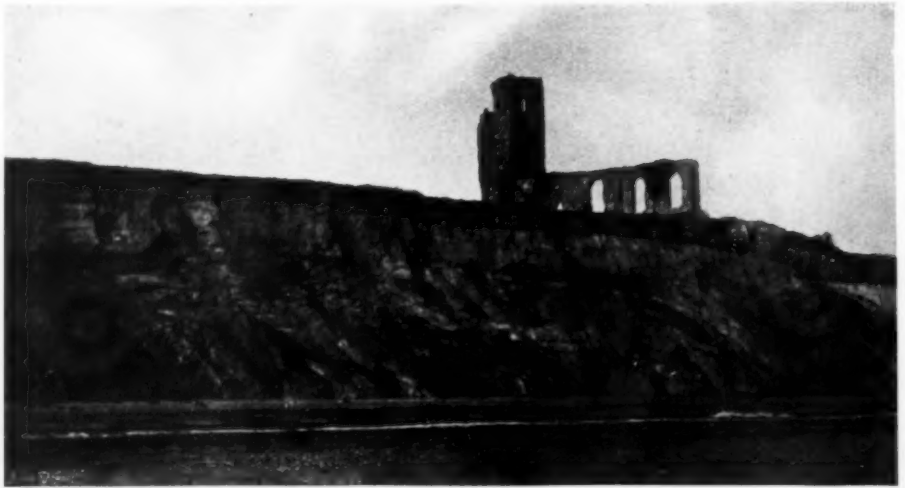
[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—I have read with interest your correspondent's letter on the raven which appeared in COUNTRY LIFE of April 3rd. It would be well if he had added the remark that the raven and its eggs are protected by law in many counties both of England and Wales, and should be in all. So-called naturalists and egg-collectors are such a curse that it is always well to bring the fact of legal protection, when it exists, before the public, in the hope, slight as it seems, of still saving some of our rarest birds from total extinction.—FRANK C. H. BORRETT.

THE DUNWICH RUINS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I am sending you herewith a new and unique photograph of the romantic church at Dunwich. The bare ruined walls have frequently been photographed, but never before, so far as I can recollect, from the sea. The picture serves a double purpose. It shows the crumbling yet majestic ruin



of a building that has stood through long periods of history, and testifies to a life in East Anglia such as we could scarcely otherwise conceive of in these days; and, further, the picture shows how the solid earth itself is crumbling into the sea at Dunwich. In few parts of the coast does erosion go on to such a great extent. Every time that I take the beautiful walk from Sizewell to Dunwich along the top of the seabanks, which at a distance look like cliffs of hard rock, I notice places where the footpath has tumbled over, and at one point a cart-road passes sheer on to the cliff, so that if one did not know what process was going on, it might be thought that cart and horses had marched straight into the sea.—G.



YOUNG RABBITS.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—I am sending you a photograph of two young rabbits sitting outside their home on a sunny evening. To obtain the photograph I focussed the camera for the burrow, tied a string to my silent shutter, climbed a tree not many yards away and held the other end of the string. I only had to wait about half an hour before these two youngsters appeared. Once the whole family came out, and it was quite an entertainment to watch them play about,

stretch, wash their faces and bask in the sun.—J. H. VICKERS.

CHILDREN AND WILD FLOWERS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—No one will deny that fresh flowers are much appreciated in hospitals, nor that "children love picking them"; but if your correspondent "M." could realise the amount of trouble caused by the receipt of boxes of faded flowers, she would hesitate before adding to the labours of the already over-worked nurse. Few cultivated flowers, still less wild ones, will stand a long afternoon in a child's hot hand, followed by a whole night's delay before being despatched, and it would obviate much unnecessary work if the following rules were borne in mind by those wishing to carry out your correspondent's suggestion: First, that the flowers should be picked when in bud, or only just out, and sent the same day; secondly, that they should be tied up in convenient bunches in order to save time in unpacking; and thirdly—to avoid the necessity of acknowledgment—that no name should be enclosed. Lastly, though no one would grudge the children the pleasure of picking flowers, let them not look upon it as a cheap means of "helping others, and brightening the days of poor sufferers."—N.

EAST AFRICAN TROPHY.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The accompanying photograph shows the heads of animals shot in British East Africa and India by Captain R. Meinertzhagen of the Royal Fusiliers. Captain Meinertzhagen was the discoverer of the great forest pig named after him (*Hylocherus Meinertzhageni*), a fine specimen of which, presented by Mr. G. C. Whitaker, is to be seen at the Natural History Museum.—G. MEINERTZHAGEN.

